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THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY

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Thatcher lands UK in the dock

BRITAIN this week finds itself in the international dock because of Mrs Thatcher's attitude to apartheid, rather than South Africa for apartheid itself. The British Prime Minister's refusal to countenance economic sanctions against Pretoria puts her out of step with some of her Cabinet colleagues as well as virtually all other Commonwealth leaders. Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania announced that they would boycott the Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh next month, and India ordered its athletes not to set off for Britain until after a meeting with the "frontline" states in Africa later in the week. The banning of Zola Budd and Annette Cowley, South African-born, but due to compete for England in the games, is unlikely to make any country change its mind.

Among those who have come out against the Prime Minister's attitude are Mr Leon Brittan, former Trade and Industry Secretary, and Mr Edward Heath, former Prime Minister. Mr Brittan said the Foreign Secretary's visit to South Africa later in the month would be "utterly hopeless" unless Sir Geoffrey Howe was backed up by effective measures against Pretoria. The Canadian Prime Minister, Mr Brian Mulroney, told Mrs Thatcher in Ottawa last week that Canada would act alone against South Africa if the Commonwealth failed to reach agreement, and the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, said there was a danger of the Commonwealth "unravelling" over the dispute.

Interview with the Prime Minister, page 4

Sir Geoffrey came back empty-handed from his visit to Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique last week. President Kaunda of Zambia had urged Mrs Thatcher to act against "Nazism in its new form" in South Africa. Sir Geoffrey argued that sanctions would only sharpen confrontation — dialogue would end apartheid more quickly and spare more lives. "The idea that one sharp last push from the outside through comprehensive sanctions will bring down apartheid . . . is sadly an illusion". The African National Congress leader, Mr Nelson Mandela, has refused to see the Foreign Secretary, and ANC leaders in Lusaka also refused to meet him last week. In South Africa itself black workers largely ignored a call for a day of protest action against the state of emergency by the Congress of South African Trade Unions. But thousands of black secondary school pupils risked expulsion by boycotting classes on the opening day of the new term.

In Washington, the only development was a leak that the Administration was considering appointing a black man, Mr Robert Brown, aged 51, a public relations executive, as ambassador to Pretoria. This, it was hoped, would head off congressional pressure for economic sanctions against South Africa.


Mrs Thatcher — out of line

Commonwealth deserves better than this

WELL, what does the Commonwealth amount to? Would its passing (wrecked on the rock marked sanctions) be cause for more than a moment's ritual lament? The questions are on the agenda because Mrs Thatcher's more vociferous supporters are putting them there — together with much seamy detail about human rights in the frontline states. And their basic message isn't really a question at all. The Commonwealth, they say, exists for no particularly good reason. If it collapsed, few would shed an honest tear. Most of the black leaders lecturing us today are manifest hypocrites and we'd be well shot of the lot of them.

Any true response to such a malign chorus can't deal in concomitant certainties. The Commonwealth — through its Secretariat — does much good work in relatively small ways. It wouldn't be the end of the world if it disintegrated. The Commonwealth's traditions reflect, in part, a departed era and empire. Perhaps they'll go inevitably one day. If everything finally fractured at the London summit next month, the shape of superpower relationships — even Third World relationships — would seem much the same the day after. So, little hyperbole. Nonetheless, the demise of the club would be a grey day for Britain in a way that eerily echoes the essential dilemma of South Africa.

The reason why the retreat of white domination there is such a powerful, absorbing drama for so much of the Western world is that the issue at the heart of it all — discrimination by colour of skin — creates constant echoes within our own societies. We aren't — in Britain or America or France or Germany — free from such taints. On the contrary, our inner cities come to haunt us. In South Africa, day by day, we see a nightmare of encrusted attitudes writ large. The Commonwealth, for Britain, has been a living symbol that affairs can be better ordered: a collection of ex-colonial states gathering year by year, with some affection, to trade blows and [illegible]ions and aspirations, that affection matters. The Queen, toiling over years, has done much to cement it. The manner of our colonial departure helped. For the most part, we were not hated. The people who took up the reins were (and still are) often people educated in Britian, trained here, influenced here. Of course some of them — some of the Sandhurst lot — aren't terrific democrats. Of course some of them feature in the Amnesty chronicles of shame (along with many, many non-Commonwealth entries). But together — the Canadians, the Australians, the Indians, the Zambians and the rest — they put their joint heritage to benign use and positive dialogue. The Commonwealth isn't a grouping like the EEC or Comecon. But it is a forum which places black and white, Third World and first world, side by side on a basis of some comradeship and shared experience. That is not, for a second, to be undervalued. And because it is valued there must still be a fervent wish that the institution will somehow emerge from August and sanctions intact. States like India have a way of marching to the top of the hill and then edging down again. That affection, again, often pulls them back.

Yet it will be damnably difficult. Mrs Thatcher, this time, has taken a stance far out of line even with the Australians, the Canadians, the New Zealanders. She has, with her lashing talk of "immorality," contrived to cut herself adrift from the multiracial essence of the institution. With her evident scorn for any kind of "measure" — however "tiny" — she has built the impression that she feels only minor affront at a system of government in a supposedly civilised state which represses and imprisons the black majority. This is a powder keg our own Prime Minister, by her tone and perhaps (who can tell?) by her beliefs, has built. If it goes off, it will not, to be sure, be the end of the world. But it will be a needless and foolish betrayal of decades of endeavour.

Hugo Young

Weakness of the headstrong stance

MRS THATCHER'S South African policy has begun to cause great alarm in the Conservative Party. This has taken a long time to happen. Until last week, the voices of criticism were few and feeble. There did not seem to be many Tory MPs who wanted a more hostile policy towards the Botha government, and there were fewer interested in economic sanctions.

For the most part, that is still the picture. Precious few Conservatives can be found who want sanctions with the same emphatic relish as, shall we say, the African National Congress. But the political instincts of the sensible wing of the party have finally been alerted. They believe they are witnessing from the Prime Minister a display of headstrong personal assertiveness which is as ignorant as it is incautious, and which could have disastrous diplomatic consequences.

We are back, in short, in the Westland syndrome. Never mind the substance, just watch the psyche — and the sheer incompetence which issues from that menacing phenomenon. On this occasion, however, the substance is vastly more important. What is at stake is not a helicopter firm and a few speculative defence contracts but the Commonwealth, the British global interest, even the monarch in her most significant political dimension. No wonder the Tory Party has at last woken up.

It is to the charge of incompetence, not wickedness, that Mrs Thatcher is vulnerable. For she is not acting in a way that seems likely to secure the British interest. On the contrary, by taking an exposed and unqualified position about the immorality of economic sanctions, she ensures that Britain takes all the flak for an attitude in which she is not actually alone.

All those western countries which in truth want to minimise action against South Africa without saying so can shelter, silent and virtuous, behind the skirts of Mrs Thatcher's endlessly capacious rhetoric. Such self-inflicted isolation breaks an elementary rule of diplomacy.

The incompetence does not end there. Assuming that the objective is a concerted, if minimal, position within the Commonwealth, the Thatcher way has made this almost impossible to achieve. It is true that in most of her formulations she has been careful to excoriate only "general, punitive economic sanctions," thus apparently leaving the door open for lesser measures such as were listed at the Nassau Commonwealth conference — the ban on direct air links, and the rest.

This careful limitation, however, is set at nothing by the tone in which she ridicules virtually any other action that has been taken. More particularly, it is hard to reconcile with the real attitude towards apartheid which emerges from the interviews she has given, including one in this paper.

Here she reveals an insensitivity in her guts to the nature of the South Africa state. She talks of apartheid as if it were purely a social condition, and as if it were absent from any sector of South Africa, such as international hotels, where blacks and whites can intermingle. Any felt sense of apartheid as a totalitarian political system seems to be missing from Mrs Thatcher's makeup. So is any true perception of the current state of emergency, and exactly what this means for thousands of critics of the regime who have been locked up without trial.

At Nassau, it appears that many Commonwealth leaders did not make a complete journey round the Thatcher mind. They did not explore the full depth of her analysis of South Africa. They were vexed by her pressure for mininal action, and infuriated by her jubilant claim to have shifted only the distance between her finger and her thumb. But they were prepared to believe that she

Continued on page 6.

INSIDE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stamping out the heroin trade

The execution of the two Australians, Kevin Barlow and Brian Chambers, in Malaysia for drug trafficking, is not only alarming but also unlikely to act as a deterrent to the continuing trade in hard drugs there.

The Malaysian prime minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad, knows well that the decision to hang the two Westerners has more to do with political pressures from within his country than with a convincing attempt to stamp out trafficking in heroin.

As any traveller to Malaysia will know, upon entering the country, the death penalty is mandatory for anyone caught with 15 grams or more of heroin; posters everywhere remind one of the gruesome consequences. However, as I found last year, heroin is easily available in the streets of Kuala Lumpur, with a large percentage of profits going to the Malaysian police authorities.

This trade will continue regardless of the deaths of two Westerners, or the executions of Malaysians. Moreover, the supply of heroin from the "Golden Triangle" area in mainland South-east Asia will continue to find its way to Western countries.

If Dr Mahathir is really keen to stamp out the trafficking in heroin, he needs to act with other South-east Asian countries to persuade the international community to cooperate in a campaign against the drug-runners.

David Bain,
60 Pembridge Villas,
London W11.

Helping the Nicaraguans

I write with reference to your excellent Leader of July 6 and the US Congress decision to grant full support to the contras.

What appears now to be the case is that a US policy in its "own backyard," characterised by support for every blood-soaked charnel house of a rightwing dictatorship and the subversion of any democratic government not to its liking, has centred on the armed overthrow of the democratically elected government of Nicaragua.

Its action in financing and supporting the contras has been declared illegal by the World Court of Justice, but the US appears nevertheless intent upon continuing this action.

There is surely a parallel here with the behaviour of the fascist states of Europe in the run-up to the last war. Undoubtedly their financial and military support of Franco, leading to the violent overthrow of the democratically elected government of Spain, was one step in the appeasement of those states.

There seems nothing that one can do to bring influence to bear upon the US Administration. But surely that historical parallel has a concommitant: governments may be fettered, but a free people is not; the time is surely now ripe for all liberal-minded peoples in Europe to begin the creation of a new international brigade to go to the assistance of the Nicaraguans.

John Tyme,
Foxmoor Lane,
Ebley, Stroud.

Geography all at sea

John Arlott's recent aquatico-gastronomic adventure into Normandy (June 15) seems to have had as unsettling effect upon his reason and sense of geography as it probably did upon his liver.

I am surprised that his proximity to the Cotentin peninsula has not yet taught him that the phrase "on the continent" is anathema to the ears of most of the inhabitants of France. To say that "they do it (look out of the bedroom at another country) all the time — in all directions" is, given the size of most European countries, as meaningless as it is physically impossible.

It was a good thing that he didn't try to go to Caen, for he would have found it considerably more than "no distance" away from wherever it was he hit the coast; but perhaps fishermen's tales of distances need to be taken with the same pinch of salt as their stories about the one that got away. And who told Mr Arlott that the mouth of the Loire was in Normandy? A map would be a good investment before your correspondent attempts further forays of this nature.

David Bamford,
Las Condes,
Santiago, Chile.

English 'arrogance'

Re your Leader "Just stick to English" (June 29). A good many Britons in Japan are currently earning good money teaching English to Japanese businessmen here in Japan. These teachers are paid from substantial language-training budgets alotted for this purpose by Nissan, Sony, Toshiba and a multitude of other large manufacturing corporations. This money is not spent so that Japanese salesmen can join the great international Anglophone club, nor to equip Japanese businessmen to buy. Alongside the English classes you will find Arabic, French, Chinese and Spanish classes. Somewhere along the line of Japan's fast and furious economic development shrewd executives in NEC, Hitachi, Toyota and all the other companies with goods to export, asked themselves a simple leading question. "Would I buy a TV or a car from someone who could not speak my language? From someone who only spoke English loudly?" The answer was obvious.

Britain and most of the Anglophone world has a huge trading deficit with Japan. Japanese protectionism is often blamed for this. True, the Japanese import and trading regulations are hard to understand — for those who don't know the language of this country. Britain's chief noticeable imports to Japan, prestige motor cars and Burberry raincoats and the like, appeal to the small elite who have joined or aspire to join the great international Anglophone club. The remaining 120 million just aren't interested in doing business with people whose language they don't understand.

OK, let's stick with loud English. But we'll be sticking with continuing trade deficits. And we'll be sticking with German cars, Korean microwave ovens and Japanese typewriters — for a long time.

Stephen Cooke,
Honcho, Tokyo.

Your leader writer "Just stick to English" (June 29) is a victim of his own unwitting arrogance, despite his simplistic claim of commercial prudence.

One example serves to expose the folly of this writer's thinking: the penetration of Japanese goods into the UK across a whole spectrum of products in recent years. Complete sectors of British industry have been obliterated by this competition — the motor cycle industry, to name but one.

Did they achieve this by jibbering Japanese at us and handing out instruction booklets full of hieroglyphics? I think not. And they are not only successful in native English-speaking countries of the world.

While the UK is a client, it maybe has the right to expect a sales approach in English. Perhaps Britain's singular lack of success in exporting goods and services against recent worldwide competition is the country's inability, and worse, its unwillingness to treat its own prospective clients in the same manner.

Kenneth Baker's ideas should be given the fullest support, and, importantly, the resources to put them into practice. Your writer should realise that being British and speaking English does not give you a free ride through life.

Graham and Nicky Cooper,
Waeldenbronn,
Esslingen, West Germany.

South Africa won't deal with Leninists

Recent local newspaper headlines read: "Lynda Chalker interviews ANC leader Oliver Tambo", and then: "Tambo refuses to abandon terrorism".

As Mrs Thatcher refused to negotiate with Argentina, ignored Colonel Gadaffi's bullying tactics and did not attempt to negotiate with Patrick Magee, she might just appreciate President Botha's determination not to do an Ethelred the Unready, or apply a Neville Chamberlain "peace in our time" fiasco, in his refusal to deal with Marxist Tambo's terrorist take-it-or-leave-it attitude.

If South Africa is to deal with Leninists she might just as well go to Russia direct, rather with one of their myrmidons.

Already Russia finds our air-sea rescue experience useful, and a Russian trawler-fisherman was air-lifted near Tristan de Cunha recently and taken to Cape Town hospital. Imagine how useful they would find our harbours, efficient railways and airways, not to mention our minerals, etc.

What could we lose from talking to Russia? All we get from the majority of Western nations is false reporting, criticism, threats and hindrance to our progress towards reform.

(Mrs) Joy Richardson,
Sunrise, Kingsway,
Warner Beach, Natal.

Australia's trade problem

Your leader (June 22) repeats the misrepresentations of the local press about the Australian economy. The immediate problem is not the trade deficit but the invisibles deficit. Australia does have a rising trade deficit in manufactures, but its origins lie rooted in our colonial heritage.

As for invisibles, on top of persistent shipping deficits must be added rising debt payments, both of private and public corporations. Though opposition to public borrowing is visceral, few are asking whether overseas private borrowing has been productively employed.

The real problems lie in factors other than "big" government spending, protection and a belligerent union movement, on which everything under the sun is blamed. Australia has a peripheral economy with a super-power economic culture (let the market decide), propagated by a mad but prestigious economics profession in academia and the bureaucracy. This has been reinforced by greater integration into international capital markets, on which sits an opportunistic finance sector.

Australia's first problem is to confront the overwhelmingly ideological character of the current barrage of criticism before the real problems of long-term restructuring can be faced.

Evan Jones,
Economics Department,
University of Sydney.

Fine line in boredom

I hope that Michael Kinsley's sparkling article "In Search of the World's Most Boring Headline" (June 1) will generate a spate of further examples, eventually to be collected into a book for bedtime reading. ("Surprises Unlikely In Indiana", with its lovely iambs and anapests, falling away to a feminine ending, is my favourite.)

Towards any such compilation I should like to offer the following.

In one of our annual sporting rituals, the Baseball Writers of America vote for retired players to be "inducted" into their Hall of Fame. One year the headline announced: "Nobody elected To Hall of Fame."

I read on in hopes this was an editorial comment — that somebody the newspaper considered a mere *Nobody* had been voted in, but no, it simply meant what is said.

John Ridland,
Hillcrest Road,
Santa Barbara,
California.

Plutonium and leukaemia

Your correspondent Dr Robin Russell Jones (June 22), discussing the Scottish Health Service report on childhood leukaemia, fails to record the detection of two other clusters in areas remote from any nuclear installation.

He further states that plutonium has a unique capacity to induce leukaemia. I can only assume that childhood leukaemia before 1943 had no cause!

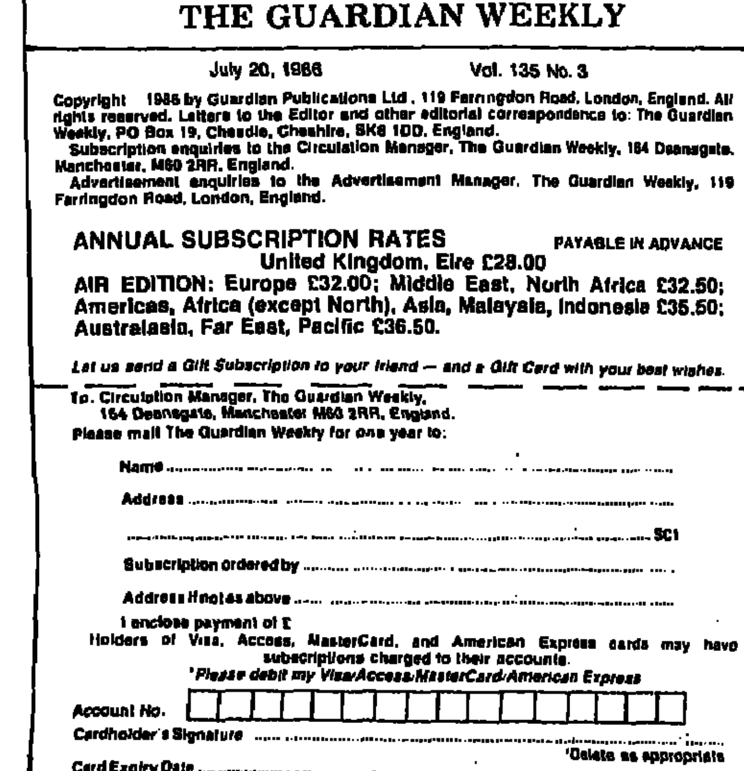
He further states that the inquiry into the Dounreay reprocessing plant has set itself up to decide the future direction of nuclear power in Europe. It is precisely because it is not so qualified that the reporter (inquiry inspector) refuses to allow nuclear policy to be discussed. Such decisions should be taken in parliaments of Europe, and are.

T. L. Jones, MRSC,
Bridge of Westfield,
By Thurso, Caithness.

Serve folly

Boris Becker played fine tennis in the Wimbledon men's singles. But the men's service — not only Becker's — has improved so much that on fast grass surfaces the game has become unbalanced: most games to service, hardly any rallies, and therefore less artistry. For grass tournaments the men's singles should have a higher net, by one or possibly two inches. To encourage services with spin and swerve.

W. F. Luttrell,
Richmond, Surrey.



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Oil price collapse puts sterling under pressure

By Peter Rodgers

THE pound fell more than 2 cents to $1.4830 on Monday as oil prices hit $9 a barrel, ending lingering City hopes of a summer cut in bank base lending rates.

The news knocked £4.4 billion off share values on the London stock market, which also suffered later in the day from the effect of renewed falls in the New York stock market, which opened sharply lower.

Although oil prices first fell below $10 last week there appears to have been a delayed reaction for sterling. Dealers said that there was now little prospect of a fall in interest rates. The Dow Jones average closed nearly 28 points lower at 1794.01.

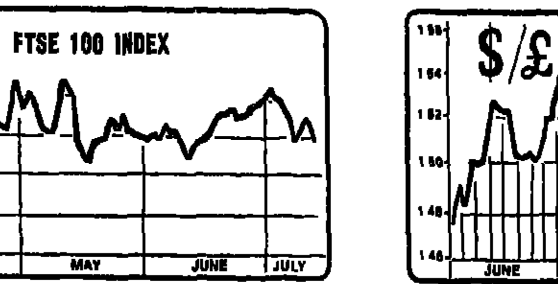
But they also expected the Government to avoid raising interest rates if the pound came under fire again, so there is not much risk that speculators will be caught out.

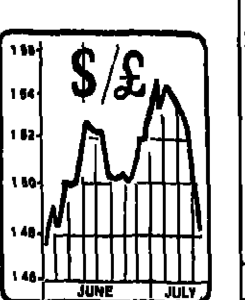
The pound closed 2.32 cents down at $1.4830 although at one stage it dropped below $1.48. At the close it was also sharply down against the German mark, losing 5 pfennig to DM3.2363. Its average value on the Bank of England index dropped 1.2 to 73.4 per cent of its 1975 value.

However, the pound has been reasonably firm lately, and the sterling index value is only at a four-month low. Further falls would probably have to be large for the Government to go to panic stations and intervene.

Some oil trading was reported as low as $8.85 a barrel for immediate delivery, which could mean cheaper petrol unless the pound continues to fall sharply against the dollar.

The worst news was on interest rates, with London money market rates firming to levels which suggest that productions of a base rate cut cirulating as recently as last week have now been dashed. Mortgage rates will also stay up as a result.





Government stocks lost over 2p in the pound as base rate hopes vanished, and the FT 30 share index lost 27.4 to 1309.08, only three points short of last week's drop, which was the biggest one-day collapse in points terms ever recorded.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates July 14	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2.3055-2.3100	2.3825-2.3700
Austria	22.71-22.74	23.02-23.06
Belgium	66.79-66.98	67.41-67.63
Canada	2.0404-2.0432	2.0741-2.0777
Denmark	12.07-12.10	12.25-12.28
France	10.40-10.42	10.54-10.56
Germany	3.23-3.23	3.28-3.29
Hong Kong	11.56-11.57	11.78-11.79
Ireland	1.0785-1.0795	1.0925-1.0935
Italy	2,218-2,223	2,249-2,254
Japan	237.50-237.89	242.45-242.92
Netherlands	3.644-3.648	3.70-3.70
Norway	11.32-11.33	11.31-11.33
Portugal	220.89-222.52	223.04-224.77
Spain	206.01-206.29	208.60-208.96
Sweden	10.58-10.60	10.70-10.72
Switzerland	2.64-2.64	2.67-2.68
USA	1.4825-1.4835	1.5055-1.5070
ECU	1.5158-1.5177	1.5389-1.5408

FT 30 Share Index 1309.09 Gold $345.63

That fall followed a similar collapse on Wall Street which in turn prompted the Federal Reserve, the US central bank to drop its key discount interest rate by half a point to 6 per cent.

The unilateral action followed efforts by the Federal Reserve to persuade the West Germans and Japanese to go along with an interest rate cut. However, the bank decided it could wait no longer with the US stock markets looking jittery after the developing weakness in the American economy.

American manufacturing industry has been hard hit by the United States' huge trade gap which is running at an annual rate of over $150 billion.

How Wall Street came down to earth — page 7

Two hundred police injured in Orange day violence

THE WEEK IN BRITAIN
by James Lewis

MORE than two hundred police and civilians were injured, and 120 people were arrested, when Northern Ireland's "loyalists" celebrated the Battle of the Boyne with their traditional marches at the weekend. Such is the condition of life in Northern Ireland, however, that the anniversary was reported to have passed "more peacefully than expected".

The main purpose of the Protestant Orange Lodges on these occasions is to taunt nationalists by marching through Catholic areas of the province. There had been fleeting hopes that the Anglo-Irish agreement, with its emphasis on equality and respect for both religious traditions, would bring an end to what Catholics regard as provocative marches in their areas. The Chief Constable, Sir John Hermon, did indeed prohibit a march through a small Catholic estate in Portadown, County Armagh, but then sanctioned a route that passed through a much larger one. This he described as "a compromise".

If the decision was intended to curry favour with the "loyalists", it manifestly failed. The police came under heavy attack from gangs of Protestant youths who assailed them with stones, darts, and bottles in Portadown and at least nine other towns. There was a particularly ugly attack on a group of Catholic houses in Rasharkin, County Antrim, by a mob which smashed windows and furniture, and beat up a 16-year-old Catholic youth — an episode described by the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mr Tom King, as "vicious and barbaric".

Before the marching began, a Catholic building worker, Mr Brian Leonard, aged 20, was shot in the head by loyalist paramilitaries in Belfast. He died later in hospital. And at Crossmaglen, near the border with the republic, two soldiers were killed and two others seriously injured by an IRA bomb.

All the Anglo-Irish Agreement seems to have done so far is to make the police in Ulster targets for "loyalist" as well as republican paramilitaries. There are still hopes, however, that when the marching season is over the more moderate Unionist leaders may yet be persuaded to talk to Westminster about the future government of the troubled province.

The Government convinced itself, without much in the way of supporting evidence, that perverse jurymen are allowing guilty defendants to escape the consequence of their crimes. The Home Secretary, Mr Douglas Hurd, therefore announced his intention to abolish the right of defence counsel to challenge individual jury members in criminal trials. The change is likely to provoke a fierce political row.

Under the present rules, counsel are allowed to challenge up to three of the twelve potential jury members without offering any reason. The right is presumably exercised in the hope that they might be replaced by jurors who correspond more to the age or social class of the defendant. A group of Tory backbenchers has been campaigning for reform ever since the so-called Cyprus spy trial last year, when lawyers made a large number of challenges on behalf of seven RAF defendants who were eventually acquitted.

The annual rate of inflation in June fell to 2·5 per cent, its lowest level for 19 years. The underlying rise in earnings is thought to be about 7·5 per cent, which may be good news for those with jobs and for the Government's electoral prospects but points to an eventual loss of competitiveness and a renewed rise in inflation next year. "Mrs Thatcher promised that low inflation would bring more jobs," recalled Labour's employment spokesman, Mr John Prescott. "It is time we were told when."

The British Steel Corporation announced a profit — of £38 million — for the first time in eleven years. The Government wants to privatise the industry, which has accumulated losses of £6 billion since 1974 and has cut its labour force from more than 200,000 to the present total of 54,000. It is, however, unlikely to be a saleable proposition until it can demonstrate an end to its dependence on state aid by showing yearly profits of about £200 million.

The British Leyland car company, which the Government was also trying to sell off earlier this year, launched a new model, the Rover 800, amid much hype which involved both the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition, Mr Neil Kinnock. The vehicle, jointly designed and manufactured by BL and Honda, puts international cooperation on trial and will also prove whether BL can survive by breaking into the premium car market along with Rolls-Royce and Jaguar.

A report by the Commons Select Committee on Defence, due to be published next week, is expected to be harshly critical of the role of a number of Whitehall officials in the Westland affair, which led to the resignation of Mr Leon Brittan as Trade and Industry Secretary. It was his department, with the approval of the Prime Minister's office, which leaked a letter from the Solicitor-General in an apparent attempt to discredit the then Defence Secretary, Mr Michael Heseltine, who objected to the sale of the Westland Helicopter Company to an American concern.

Although extraordinary precautions were being taken to prevent publication of the report before MPs leave for the summer recess at the end of this week, one source described the document as "one of the most damning reports, written in the most stinging of language about government officials, that has ever been written". Particular targets for criticism are thought to be Mrs Thatcher's press secretary, Mr Bernard Ingham (who refused under orders to give evidence to the committee) and the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robert Armstrong.

The Labour-controlled Inner London Education Authority contrived to make itself look silly when it tried to abolish competitive sports "to save losers from humiliation". A Bristol primary head teacher decided, simultaneously but independently, to scrap the school egg-and-spoon race for much the same reason. Such reasoning was a "sour and pessimistic dismissal of the natural competitive spirit" said the new Education Secretary, Mr Kenneth Baker, whose inspectors reported only last month on a decline in sporting prowess in some schools *(Comment, page 10)*.

The pop singer, Boy George (George O'Dowd), was arrested and charged with possession of heroin. He had been undergoing medical treatment after weeks of controversy and confusion over his alleged connection with drugs. His brother, Kevin, had earlier appeared in court accused with four others — including another pop singer, Marilyn (Peter Anthony Marilyn) — of conspiring to supply Boy George with heroin.

Tories plan pre-election spree

By John Carvel

MINISTERS have decided on a billion pound giveaway to the local authorities as part of a package to soften up public opinion for a possible general election in June or October next year.

Extra rate support grant, which will be pumped in to local councils throughout Britain, should be sufficient to keep average rate increases close to zero next April. Ministers believe that such a performance will provide a springboard for Conservative success in the district council elections in May. Mr Norman Tebbit, the Conservative Party chairman, has already told party agents that if the momentum of those results is strong enough Mrs Thatcher may be tempted in to a snap election.

Mr Nigel Lawson, the Chancellor, is now increasing the local authority expenditure plan — the amount he publicly assumes the councils will spend — by £3.4 billion.

Mr Ridley has got almost everything he wanted from the Chancellor. The Treasury's spending plan for the English local authorities in 1987/88 is to be increased by £2.9 billion to £25.2 billion. An extra £500 million to be added to the spending plans of councils in Scotland and Wales.

The move is a remarkable turnaround for a government which has spent six years trying to reduce local authority spending by legislation and grant penalties on "profligate" authorities.

It is expected that between 15 and 20 councils will be subjected to rate capping next year, slightly more than this year's total of 12. Ministers are still finalising how they should be chosen. The local authorities will argue that the Government's spending plan is insufficient for their needs, but the settlement appears to be so much more generous than in the past that they are looking for a catch.

Thatcher to visit Moscow next year

By Hella Pick

MRS THATCHER is to visit the Soviet Union next year. An invitation from Mr Gorbachev was delivered to her on Monday by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, on the first day of his visit to Britain and the Prime Minister has "warmly" welcomed it.

She was satisified, after two hours of talks with Mr Shevardnadze, that Anglo-Soviet relations are again "fully operational after the set-backs of last year," when there were a series of tit-for-tat expulsions of diplomats and journalists.

Mr Shevardnadze also brought another letter from Mr Gorbachev, in what has by now become an extensive correspondence between Mrs Thatcher and the Soviet leader on arms control and the closely-related goal of another superpower summit later this year.

But it was as a result of Monday's talks, as well as talks with Sir Geoffrey Howe, that prospects for a worldwide negotiated ban on chemical weapons appear to have improved. There is now a far greater likelihood that such an agreement will be concluded before the end of next year, in time to halt US plans for manufacturing binary weapons and escalating an arms race in chemcial weapons.

Mr Timothy Renton, who was due to outline the British proposals, which focus on verification and compliance, at the UN Disarmament Committee in Geneva, gave Mr Shevardnadze a preview. He met what was described by senior British officials as "considerable interest" from the Soviet Foreign Minister, who was said to be attracted by the compromise that Britain was proposing.

It has to be assumed that the Reagan Administration, which has certainly been extensively consulted, is also willing to negotiate on the basis of the British proposal, rather than stand by its existing demands for "challenge inspection," which the Soviet Union has consistently rejected ever since it was tabled two years ago.

The Soviet minister's talks with British ministers had an auspicious beginning, with Whitehall describing them as "very relaxed, constructive and detailed," and Mr Shevardnadze himself emerged from the meeting with Mrs Thatcher beaming broadly and saying it has been "quite a conversation."

The bilateral relationship is genuinely on the mend, with growing emphasis now being put by both countries on economic and industrial cooperation.

Mr Shevardnadze also gave his consent to a proposal by the Great Britain-USSR Association to have an informal meeting of experts from Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States to consider "the economic and industrial challenges of the last decade of this century."

Thatcher refutes the moral argument

Hugo Young talks to the Prime Minister about sanctions against South Africa

MARGARET THATCHER, it turns out, is not entirely without first-hand experience of South Africa. She went there once, as Secretary of State for Education and Science, to open an observatory. She does not make too much of this distant episode, but it has left a vivid impression and remains in the present tense. Could she say, I asked her last week, after she had sent Sir Geoffrey on his way, that she had seen apartheid in operation?

"You have to be very careful in saying that just because you've been to a country, you've seen it," she replied. "But I've seen apartheid in a number of respects. The first thing you see when you get off at Johannesburg airport is that you go into a hotel which is totally non-colour-conscious. You go into a dining room and there's all colours and backgrounds. So your first impression of South Africa is rather different from what you've been led to believe."

Soon, however, you came across other things, which were different from Britain. Mrs Thatcher had not been to Soweto or any other township. But she had seen both sides of South Africa, including the part where apartheid apparently did not exist. "I've seen it on occasions where there's no apartheid, and I've seen it when there is apartheid. And I don't like apartheid. It's wrong.

"Let me make that clear. Apartheid is wrong. It has to go, and it is going."

The question is how to speed its departure. Despite the events of recent weeks and months, the Prime Minister is an unswerving believer in the virtues of contact, dialogue, persuasion. She had made a start, she reminded me, when she had received President Botha at Chequers last year and told him that forced removals of black communities were "totally and utterly and particularly repugnant to us".

Their meeting and subsequent correspondence had been fruitful. "Those have been stopped now. Things are coming in the right direction. Naturally one wishes them to come faster."

I suggested that this process might now have come to a halt. "What leverage do we have through mere persuasion, particularly when the main characters in the drama won't even see our Foreign Secretary?"

Mrs Thatcher deployed the quiet voice of incredulous affront. "I'm sorry, that's absolute nonsense. President Botha's seeing the Foreign Secretary. He was always going to see the Foreign Secretary."

"But Sir Geoffrey had wanted to see him this week."

"You have to try and arrange a date. I run eight, nine, sometimes 12 engagements a day. I can't just fit people in. Let's look on the positive side, and not try to make every single difficulty in this country, difficulties which don't exist. Mr Botha will see Sir Geoffrey Howe. Course he will. The question is arranging a date which is mutually convenient."

"But wasn't it a bit humiliating that the trip was set up so publicly and then Botha said he wouldn't be available?"

Mrs Thatcher said it might have been better if they could have arranged the whole thing more quietly. But there would certainly be a meeting, and we should meanwhile look on the positive side, which consisted of fulfilling the terms of the last EEC communiqué outlining the need to get negotiations started between the South African Government and black political leaders. Negotiation, not sanctions — the Rhodesian way.

"But Rhodesia survived sanctions only because it had South African support. Surely there is no South Africa to support South Africa?"

"South Africa has colossal internal resources. A colossal coastline. And whatever sanctions were put on, materials would get in and get out. There's no way you can blockade the whole South African coastline. No way."

So, I asked, was there no economic pressure which, in the Prime Minister's view, would have any effect?

The banks, she thought, who had pressed for repayment of the South African debt last year, had had some effect. But the main influence came from people inside South Africa who were fighting apartheid. And who were these? Above all, industry, "and some of the political parties."

"But the question is whether governments, your government, can and should add to that pressure?"

"You're talking about economic pressure," said Mrs Thatcher, "I'm talking about how to bring about negotiations." And here she launched into an attack on past policies. South Africa should never have been isolated by the world. "I think we should have had more contact. We would have influenced her more. She would have been able to see that multi-racial societies do work in other countries. They do, of course, have certain problems. We've seen the problems in Kenya and Uganda. But South Africa would have been much more influenced to come our way."

Picture by Frank Martin

As it was, even the moderates, black and white, would respond badly if they saw the West just hitting out at their country.

"So are you saying there is no form of hostile pressure which is appropriate?"

"Let me say what I'm saying," she responded, in a voice which had now long assumed the deliberate and emphatic timbre familiar at prime minister's question time. "There is no case in history that I know of where punitive, general economic sanctions have been effective to bring about internal change.

"That is what I believe. That is what the Labour Party in power believed. That is what most of Europe believes. That is what most western industrialised countries believe. If that is what they believe, there is no point in trying to follow that route."

So sanctions, first of all, would not achieve the desired effect. But that was only the beginning of the case against them.

We now approached the central thrust of the prime ministerial argument, that part of it which elicited her most withering scorn. But there was a moment of calm before the storm, even a brief, flickering line of self-doubt, concerning a point over which "people, if I might say so, seem to me confused — although they might make the same allegations about myself."

The matter in question was the *moral* case for sanctions. "I must tell you I find nothing *moral* about people who come to me, worried about unemployment in this country, or about people who come to us to say we must do more to help Africa — particularly black Africans.

"I find nothing *moral* about them, sitting in comfortable circumstances, with good salaries, inflation-proof pensions, good jobs, saying that we, as a matter of *morality*, will put x hundred thousand black people out of work, knowing that this could lead to starvation, poverty and unemployment, and even greater violence."

I tried to intervene. "So the black leaders who . . ."

But Mrs Thatcher was thumping the table. "That to me is *immoral*. I find it repugnant. We had it at the Community meeting. Nice conference centre. Nice hotels. Good jobs. And you really tell me you'll move people around as if they're pawns on a checkerboard, and say that's *moral*. To me it's *immoral*."

"So how do you read the motives of the black leaders in South Africa, Bishop Tutu and many others, who are actually in favour of economic sanctions?"

"I don't have to read them. I can tell you there are many, many people in South Africa, black South Africans, who hope to goodness that economic sanctions will not be put on."

"How do you know that?"

"Huh. You've heard Chief Buthelezi say that. He said it in this room."

"That's one."

"But seven million Zulus. He said it on the doorstep of Downing Street. I've heard it, too, from some of my . . . from some other people, here in this room. Here in this room."

"All right. But Tutu, Mandela, the ANC, the UDF, also represent a large segment of opinion — which you reject."

"I totally reject it. Because I find it very difficult to know how they can turn round and say 'Put our people into acute difficulty. They've got good jobs. They're looking after their children. But pursue a policy which can lead to children being hungry'. I find it very difficult indeed."

So sanctions, far from being moral, were positively immoral; and, as we have already seen, they would be ineffective. A third objection could also be made, and here one suddenly became aware of scores, nay hundreds, of unseen visitors who have passed through Mrs Thatcher's drawing-room and had some of the elementary facts of life explained to them, particularly the dire occasions for retaliatory action which are afforded by the geography of southern Africa.

"I sometimes get the map out and say look at it. Have you looked at how goods are going to get in and out of Zambia and Zimbabwe. Close Beit Bridge and how are you going to do it? That's the maize route. When there was drought, that's the route through which maize went to keep people alive.

"I ask them, have you looked at it? Have you looked at the poverty and hunger and starvation — just when we're after all trying to give things *to* Africa, to see she doesn't suffer in this way?"

The voice was shaking now, at this spectacle of a continent which displayed such inexplicable moral inconsistencies. "I find it astonishing, utterly astonishing, that on the one hand we're doing everything to help Ethiopia, everything to relieve poverty and starvation,

'I find it astonishing, utterly astonishing, that on the one hand we're doing everything to help Ethiopia . . . and at the same time we're suggesting that you turn people who are in work, out of work'

everything to get the right seeds, the right husbandry. And at the same time we're suggesting that you turn people who are in work, out of work. And add to the problems you've already got. When people call that moral, I just *gasp*."

Nor would the retaliation stop with the impoverishment of black Africa. There was also the West's strategic interest in certain raw materials — and here too the moral issue kept breaking through.

"Platinum comes in quantity from only two places, South Africa and the Soviet Union. Are people who say there's a moral question suggesting that the world supply of platinum should be put in charge of the Soviet Union? And there are other things. Your chemical chrome, your vanadium, and of course gold and diamonds. They would have a fantastic effect on the economy of the Soviet Union.

"To me, it is absolutely absurd that people should be prepared to put increasing power into the hands of the Soviet Union on the grounds that they disapprove of apartheid in South Africa."

These lectures have evidently borne fruit. "I go through these things with some people, and they say: no one told us, no one explained this to us."

The rest of the world, however, would seem to be looking for deeper and different explanations. Particularly the Commonwealth. There was, as the Prime Minister had early in our conversation conceded, a desire at least for some mark of disapproval of apartheid to be made. "Signs and gestures" she called them.

This was why Britain had agreed to the EEC package last year. But this hadn't been enough. "The Commonwealth wanted more. So we did krugerrands. And we put the extra gold coins in. And we've done no promotion of tourism. And various other things. But I don't know anyone in power in the western world who is suggesting punitive sanctions."

"But they are suggesting bigger gestures, aren't they?"

Indeed they were, she said. But I had lit the blue touchpaper again. "All right. Supposing you start with fruit and vegetables. That would be 95,000 people, blacks and their families, out of work. *Moral?* Poof! *Moral?* No social security. *Moral?*

"Up would go the prices here. Some of it would be sold out of the coastline, through third countries, re-marked, and perhaps come in at a higher price. And the retaliation we could have to things we export to South Africa! What is *moral* about that?"

This raised a question even about the gestures we had already taken part in. Insofar as they were designed, in a minor way, to inconvenience South Africa, they were surely open to objection from the Thatcherite point of view.

"We've gone along with the gestures and signals," she said, "Because I recognise that people want to do something more than words."

"But you don't really believe in them?"

"I don't believe that punitive economic sanctions will bring about internal change."

"But even the gestures you're not keen on?"

(Pause). "I don't think the gestures are very effective. We withdrew our military attache from South Africa. That means we don't get as much information as we should otherwise. Often you argue against the big things, the really damaging things that would cause unemployment. So you accept much smaller things, as we did."

A few weeks ago, in the early stages of the sanctions crisis, the Prime Minister had formulated what struck me as a classic Thatcherite utterance, when she said: "If I were the odd one out and I were right, it wouldn't matter, would it?" I now reminded her of this, and asked whether she was really so indifferent to the opinions of allies, Commonwealth colleagues, and so forth.

She said this had all been a familiar experience for her. There were many times when she had been the one to put arguments that no one else actually liked to put. She won some, she lost some, but the times on which she lost it were, it seemed, invariably because her antagonists were moved more by emotion than by reason. "If you're alone, you only operate really by persuading. Your only way of persuading is by argument."

So was she now winning the argument, from this lonely eminence? Apparently she had more allies than we could know about.

"Look, in the world in which I live, sometimes you make the argument and sometimes people do not express their own views, knowing you will express yours. And they hope to goodness that you'll win your argument. Many people.

"In the world where I live, sometimes there's a public views and a private view." This wasn't, of course, her own problem. "So often my own converge," she chortled, with legitimate pride. But she understood other people's difficulties and took comfort from their tacit backing.

Standing on her own high ground of unshakeable consistency, Mrs Thatcher is especially contemptuous of her political opponents — "people who took the same view as we do when they were in power, and voted in the United Nations the same way we did."

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The moral argument

Continued from page 4

I suggested, in Labour's defence, that the internal situation had drastically changed since Denis Healey was in power and Dick Crossman was composing his diaries. Political upheaval had hugely escalated, and the government was weaker.

"And apartheid has been reduced," Mrs Thatcher snapped back. "There's practically no apartheid left in sport."

"Due to a boycott," I replied.

"Well." Short pause. "Due to a boycott. Due partly to a boycott. Not economic sanctions. A political thing."

The prohibition against mixed marriages had also gone. "As a matter of fact, I think it's the thing that signals the end of apartheid." The pass laws were also going. And enforced removals. And job reservation. Even the Group Areas Act, Mrs Thatcher claimed, was "starting to go."

There were now "many black people with professional qualifications and of considerable substance." Their only problem was that they couldn't live where they wanted, and couldn't take a proper part in government. "Those are the things to which you've got to address your minds and your action. I think we've done quite well by persuasion, particularly in the last 18 months. But by *non-economic* ways. And we should go on that way."

The next test is the mini-Commonwealth conference in early August. By then Sir Geoffrey will have made his rendezvous with Botha, and Mrs Thatcher hopes that Bishop Tutu will follow. After all, she had opened the door to the bishop in London. "He asked to see me. Of course I saw him. I don't just refuse to see people. I very much enjoyed talking to him."

Even though she didn't agree with him? "We got just a little bit more understanding between us, and if we went on talking I think we would again."

She gave me a foretaste of how her emollient self would greet the Commonwealth. "Emotions will be running high," she predicted. "And when that happens, you just have to let them run high and keep calm yourself. Because it doesn't help if you let your own emotions run high, even though they feel as though they're running high."

Her job would be steadfastly to remind her seething interlocutors of some of the facts. "How many of you have states of emergency? How long have you had them? How many of you detain people without trial? How many have had censorship? How many of you have excluded people on racial grounds?"

I wondered whether they might not get irritated if she started talking to them like that. Wouldn't it be a little patronising?

"It's not patronising. That's just putting facts to them. Patronising? What's patronising about putting the facts? The Commonwealth's been strong enough to survive all those things. It's not for me to be patronising. I try not to be. Not for us to be patronising to South Africa either. We don't live there."

"We can still get through, if we will," she said at the end. "We can still help to get negotiations started." But to this end she did not sound like a politician preparing to agree to a single thing that much of the world expects of her

Next week: Thatcher on UK politics

East Germans gaoled for 10 years

By Edward Vulliamy

AN East German couple, Reinhardt and Sonja Schulze, were gaoled for 10 years at the Old Baily last week for preparing to spy against Britain.

They had denied three charges under the Official Secrets Act and were convicted on one of them: that they had acted, between 1980 and 1985, such as to prepare to prejudice the interests and security of the state.

Mr Justic Michael Davis said he did not know whether they had communicated secrets to East Germany and caused damage to state interests. But: "What is certain is that you two are intelligent, talented and determined people. If you had not been detected, you would have done what you were sent here to do and what you made elaborate preparations to do."

After serving their prison terms, they would be deported, said the judge. He also imposed three-year concurrent sentences on them for offences to which they had pleaded guilty: Mr Schulze for possession of a forged British passport, and Mrs Schulze for possession of a forged West German identity card.

The jury had taken four hours to reach a unanimous verdict. They broke their session only to ask the judge, as a point of law, whether the preparations to spy had to have damaged state interests in themselves to warrant a conviction. Mr Justice Davies said that, under the Official Secrets Act, it was the purpose of the preparations, not the actual damage, that mattered.

Counsel for Mr Schulze, Mr Richard Ferguson QC, said that the couple had not breached any trust, tried to gain employment to obtain information or exploited people.

For Mrs Schulze, Mr Andrew Bright said that agents "had been recruited from the highest calibre of people" and asked the judge to accept that they acted from ideological and not financial motives.

The judge said: "I accept that." He ruled that it would be wrong to impose the maximum sentence of 14 years because their actions were preparatory, and did not constitute the full offence of damaging state interests.

The real identity of the Schulzes had remained a mystery, even after they retracted their elaborate false identities as Bryan and Ilona Strunze.

After the verdict, they asked the judge to believe that they were Mr and Mrs Schulze and that they had been married 15 years. Mr Justice Davies said: "I do not know whether you have given your true names, but I do accept that you are husband and wife."

It emerged after the trial that a Communist newspaper in East Germany, Junge Welt had published a photograph of the couple as schoolchildren in 1968.

The evidence on which the jury convicted was an accumulation of radio equipment, written five-figure numbers and encoding and decoding equipment found by police when they raided the couple's home at Waye Avenue, Cranford, West London, last August.

It emerged during closed sessions of the trial that some of the five figure numbers found written, or indented on pieces of paper, correlated exactly with signals in morse code picked up by Government Communications Headquarters. It also emerged that pages from a "one time pad," a piece of equipment used to scramble and unscramble coded messages, had been used. The Schulzes' "one time pad" had been found, with other miniaturised equipment, hidden in an air freshener in their garden shed.

It is possible that the informant who alerted British intelligence about the Schulzes was Mr Oleg Gordievsky, the head of the KGB in London and a double agent until he defected last summer.

Record profit by Post Office

By Michael Smith

RECORD profits of around £154 million will be disclosed shortly by the Post Office.

The figure is an increase of £1.5 million on the 1984/85 performance, and confirms the Post Office's status as the world's most profitable postal undertaking. The achievement could prove embarrassing to plans to raise postal charges in the autumn.

The Post Office is likely to emphasise that the peak profit was achieved at a time when the price of a first class stamp was unchanged throughout the year and when 1p was knocked off the price of second class postage.

Helped by this pricing mechanism the volume of letters grew by six per cent during the year. A 20 per cent growth in volume achieved in the past four years has provided the Post Office with the best period of sustained expansion since the 1930s

THE WEEK

THE next space shuttle launch has been pushed back to 1988 instead of July, 1987, as predicted in the wake of the Challenger disaster, which killed seven astronauts.

The head of Nasa, Dr James Fletcher, said on Monday that the space agency had been too optimistic in view of the extensive testing needed on the solid rocket boosters. A leak in the O-rings on the right booster led to the Challenger explosion on January 28.

THE Israeli cabinet decided on Monday to let the Attorney-General, Mr Yosef Harish, order a police inquiry into the country's Shin Bet security service, rejecting his appeal for a state investigation.

The decision by a vote of 14-11 was a setback for the Prime Minister, Mr Shimon Peres, who has said he fears a police probe into the killing of two Arabs captured in a 1984 bus hijacking could harm security by revealing Shin Bet secrets.

AT least 10 people were killed or wounded last week when four Israeli helicopters attacked a Palestinian refugee camp in Sidon, south Lebanon with more than 16 air-to-ground missiles. In another attack, this time south of Beirut, four Palestinians were killed by Israeli bombers.

THE Deputy Commander of PLO Forces, Mr Khalil Al Wazir (Abu Jihad) arrived in Tunis last week after being expelled by the Jordanian government.

THE United States and Libya, at the weekend, appeared to be facing off for a new confrontation over navigation rights in the Gulf of Sidra, after Tripoli announced that it was conducting missile target practice off the coast near where the US is conducting "routine" patrols.

PHILIPPINE president, Corazon Aquino, said that she would forgive leaders of the recent aborted rebellion if they "swore allegiance" to her government.

However, her soft approach to Arturo Tolentino, leader of the putsch attempt, was severely criticised in the nation's press. The Independent Manila Times said: "The Government cannot pussyfoot with presidential pretenders. These are not normal times. Drastic problems call for drastic measures."

A NEW election in Italy drew closer after the Italian Socialist Party refused to give its support to Mr Giulio Andreotti, the Christian Democrat foreign minister, who was asked to form a new government last week. Mr Andreotti was named as Prime Minister after the Socialist leader, Mr Bettino Craxi, resigned.

WEST GERMAN federal investigators were seeking members of the Red Army Faction terrorist group in connection with the killing, last week, of a leading nuclear expert and senior executive of the giant Siemens company.

The killing, by a remote controlled car bomb, of Professor Karl Heinz Beckurts, a leading advocate of nuclear power and high technology expert, came on the same day that terrorists blew up the French police anti-crime squad offices in Paris. *(Le Monde, page 11).*

THE US last week offered to reduce its military personnel at Torrejon airbase outside Madrid in exchange for significant concessions by Spain.

THE European Parliament voted overwhelmingly for a new 1986 budget to replace the one declared null and void by the EEC Court of Justice two weeks ago.

PRESIDENT François Mitterrand left Moscow after a three-day official visit, believing that there will be a superpower summit later this year, "but that diplomacy still has a long way to go."

He was full of praise for Mr Mikhail Gorbachev, with whom he evidently believed he has established a good personal relationship. "He is a man of our time, a modern man," the French president said. *(Thatcher to visit Moscow, page 3)*

AN angry crowd in Ahmedabad, India, burned two young Muslims alive at a hospital at the weekend, as the death toll in five days of Muslim-Hindu violence rose to 49. It was the second time in two days that Muslims were burned alive in rioting that erupted last week in Gujarat state.

AFTER four years of military rule Bangladesh, last week, made a limping start towards democracy with the opening of the first session of the newly elected parliament. But the occasion was marred by bomb blasts, a baton charge and the absence of all but four of the 120 opposition members in the 330-seat parliament.

THE Australian Government won the vital mandate of trade unions in the Labour Party organisation for its prescription for economic recovery. The plan, outlined by Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, in an address to the country last month, includes a hardline wages policy and further cutting of real wages.

BRITISH and Colombian government officials remained at a loss last week to explain the shooting of the British honorary consul, Mr Geoffrey Hutchinson, in Barranquilla. Local police said they could see no motive for the killing.

Basque bomb kills nine

By our own Correspondents

NINE young Spanish Civil Guard cadets died on Monday in the bloodiest attack by Basque separatists in Madrid for 12 years.

The killings, on the eve of Tuesday's formal convening of the parliament elected on June 22, were seen as retaliation by Eta for the expulsion of its leader from France the week before.

Rightwing vigilantes said that they would kill Basque refugees in France at a rate of one a day in revenge for the Madrid blast.

The explosion brought the highest death toll in any single attack on the Spanish security forces since Eta began its campaign of terror 17 years ago.

The nine cadets who died, all aged between 20 and 25, were on their way in a convoy of three vehicles to a Civil Guard highway patrol training centre to practise driving techniques when the attack occurred.

A delivery van parked in an elegant square exploded when it was passed by a bus containing 50 cadets. At least 60 other people were injured in the explosion.

Eta had been expected to seek revenge for the expulsion from France of Mr Domingo Iturbe, who was alleged to be its chief commander. Meanwhile, in Portugal, a new revolutionary organisation proclaimed its existence after a series of explosions which killed two people and caused property damage in district capitals.

Early on Monday, two bombs exploded in the town of Evora, in the Alentajo district, at the house of landowners who had been involved in disputes over land reform with radical peasants. Another two blasts occurred in the industrial centre of Setubal, south of Lisbon, and a massive explosion in Lisbon killed two youths and wrecked an apartment belonging to a retired army officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Joao Miranda Relvas.

A Lisbon newspaper was later contacted and told about a message left in a dustbin by a group calling itself the Armed Revolutionary Organisation which claimed responsibility for the bombings. Until now, Portugal's principle terrorist organisation has been the Armed Forces of the April 25 Movement (FP25).

Thatcher faces revolt over sanctions

By James Naughtie

THE Prime Minister is facing her most serious revolt for five years among influential Conservative backbenchers over her South African policy. It is clear that many traditional Tories are determined that her mind must be changed on the issue of sanctions before Commonwealth leaders meet next month, and that direct pressure must be applied on Downing Street.

Mr Cranley Onslow, chairman of the 1922 committee of backbenchers, is being pressed by some of the most widely-respected figures in the party to tell Mrs Thatcher that the prospect of a rift in the Commonwealth now threatens party unity more seriously than any other dispute since the economic trauma of 1981.

Few MPs believe any substantial outcome can be expected from the visits of the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, to Pretoria this month. They are also reconciled to a painful encounter with other Commonwealth leaders in London in August.

Their alarm has been increased by their belief that even if the Prime Minister gives some ground she will be weakened because of the rigidity of the position she has so far adopted and the consequent difficulty of arranging a graceful retreat.

African withdrawals from the Commonwealth Games have added to the pressure. Although rightwingers were quick to criticise the ban on Zola Budd and Annette Cowley — some called for the games to be called off — many Tories are appalled at the potential damage the issue could cause to the Commonwealth, to which they have a deep commitment.

One senior figure predicted at the weekend that the threat of a split at the August summit would throw the Conservative party into turmoil. Mr Edward Heath, the former Prime Minister, joined Mrs Thatcher's critics, saying that the strain on the party was now greater than it had been on the Rhodesian crisis.

He said on TV-am's Jonathan Dimbleby on Sunday programme that if Britain was to take further steps, which he supported, they had to include action which affected trade. The logical conclusion was a trade blockade.

Unless Sir Geoffrey's Pretoria mission produced a breakthrough that process would have to begin.

Coming after last week's powerful speech from Mr Leon Brittan, the former Trade and Industry Secretary, in favour of economic measures — and the threat of them, as a weapon to force South Africa to make concessions — Mr Heath's intervention increases the pressure.

Even among backbenchers traditionally regarded as more friendly to the Prime Minister there is deep concern. It is this, rather than the attacks from long-standing opponents, that is worrying some of her ministers.

Mr Francis Pym, the former Foreign Secretary, said at the weekend that he believed a majority of the Cabinet opposed the Prime Minister's stance on sanctions and expressed the view that she had gone "out on a limb" in her interviews.

Though some are still convinced that she may be willing to go along with a number of specific economic measures — perhaps backed by the United Nations — the tone of her objections to "immoral" sanctions is worrying her party.

One senior backbencher privately described her attitude as "paranoiac" and accused her of failing to understand the legitimate views of other countries.

The difficulties over the Commonwealth Games have focused the sanctions issue for many MPs. Mr Dick Tracey, the Sports Minister, regretted the withdrawal of some nations, saying it was like having a party with some of the members of the family missing. He added that competitors were unhappy at the use of the games for a political purpose.

Another element in the crisis is the attitude of Buckingham Palace. The Queen is known to be deeply concerned over the prospect of a split in the Commonwealth and her view has been made known by palace officials to senior politicians.

Stealth plane under guard

By Alex Brummer In Washington

ARMED US Air Force guards maintained a vigil in California's Sequoia National Forest on Monday, as investigators sought to recover fragments of the top-secret F-19 stealth bomber which crashed in the early hours of last Friday morning. An air force board of inquiry into the crash has been commissioned.

A weekend statement from the air force identified the pilot of the plane as Major Ross Mulhare, aged 35, who was based at Nellis air force base in the Nevada Desert, adjacent to the strongly secured nuclear test site.

This disclosure appeared to confirm reports that the plane is part of a squadron of F-19 experimental stealth fighters, the existence of which has never been acknowledged by the Pentagon.

Defence experts said at the weekend, however, that the Lockheed Corporation — believed to be the main contractor — had built as many as three dozen of the experimental fighters, suggesting that their technology has advanced much further than previously disclosed. The stealth fighter is officially called the Covert Survivable In-weather Reconnaissance Strike Aircraft.

Among service personnel working with the plane it has been nicknamed "project Harvey" because of its apparent ability to evade detection by radar. Harvey was the invisible rabbit in a James Stewart movie.

Great care has been taken to keep the highly classified aircraft secret. Tests are normally conducted under the cover of darkness, and the plane is stored in protective bunkers at Nellis.

It is said to resemble the space shuttle in shape. The curved body is designed to reduce the radar image of the plane. It is built of materials such as carbon and epoxy composites, rather than metals, so that it absorbs radar.

One recent technical magazine report said that the plane produces no more than a hum from a distance of 100 feet. It also seeks to minimise the heat emitted into the atmosphere as part of its effort to avoid detection.

The weakness of the headstrong stance

Continued from page 1

honestly abominated apartheid as much as they did. They thought their disagreement related to means, not to objectives.

Now they can believe this no longer. It emerges that Mrs Thatcher's understanding of apartheid, at the nerve-ends of her sensitivity, is different from theirs. President Kaunda is convinced, and has told her, that if the people now dying or being repressed in South Africa were white, not black, her protests would be ten times louder. The way she addresses the problem, now that she has made her analysis a public crusade, makes that contention hard to rebut.

So, as the mini-summit of the Commonwealth approaches, even such judicious restraint as she has allowed herself may turn out to be valueless. Although she has left a door syntactically open for small measures, she has stirred up a Commonwealth that may no longer be satisfied with them. Because it is her good faith, and not merely her tactical judgment, which she has given them reason to doubt, the question whether any consensus can be reached is shrouded in deepest pessimism.

It need not have happened this way. If the object was to play for time, all Mrs Thatcher had to do was announce in the vaguest terms that something would have to be done if Botha did not relent. Sir Geoffrey could then have been sent on a global shuttle, rather than pottering round southern Africa to be insulted. From Tokyo to Washington the voices could have been taken, with Britain acting as the co-ordinator of a world endeavour which she stood a good chance of influencing.

But this would have presumed a different prime minister: one who genuinely understands that some international action is now essential in the British interest, and one who possesses enough far-sighted cunning to make this as unextravagant as possible. Those who have found Mrs Thatcher's recent words and action hard to credit do not appreciate that she has never had either that understanding or that guile.

As it is — the final incompetence — she is about to be isolated even from her most faithful ally, Washington. Domestic American pressure, already evident in the resolutions Congress has passed, seems likely to oblige President Reagan either to submit to a Senate proposal or to come forward with his own plan. Public opinion exerts an influence there, on this issue, which is regrettably not present here to draw the prime minister away from her self-congratulatory pieties.

Why has such folly been allowed such free rein? What drives Mrs Thatcher on, apart from the supercharged fuel of a moral rectitude that brooks no debate?

One worm which eats her is a contemptuous lack of sentiment for the Commonwealth. Resistance to the Commonwealth's importunate demands, which has been her stance at every Commonwealth conference since she came in, has evolved into an ugly indifference to its future should it dare to pose itself against the Thatcher scale of values.

Another irritant, I believe, is the recent history of Zimbabwe. That final act of decolonisation is normally held to have been one of Mrs Thatcher's triumphs. This is not how she regards it. To her, intimates have told me in the past, it produced the wrong result: not the Muzorewa-Nkomo victory the Foreign Office had promised her, but the ascendancy of Robert Mugabe.

This experience, it appears, has made her believe she was wrong to abandon her original pledge, to recognise Muzorewa's puppet government. She does not want to repeat the experience in South Africa, by giving sustenance to the ANC.

But, whatever the truth about these deeper motivations, the Conservative Party is becoming frightened by her impulses. Rather suddenly, they are looking at a Commonwealth about to tear itself asunder. Britain seems to be led by an avenging angel, looking neither to right nor left of her, into inglorious isolation. And to what purpose.?

Was it for this, more Tories are asking, that their party has survived for 150 years? To line up behind the moral certitudes of one woman? Whose idea of the finest political sagacity is to dig a trench from which there is no escape? Who was elected by them, they imagined, to hold Crown and Commonwealth together, not let them fall apart?

It took some time for these to become the questions. Now that they have, it is not easy to see where the answers might lead.

How Wall Street came down to earth

By Alex Brummer In Washington

WE CAN all breathe a sigh of relief that Wall Street's sudden and sharp reversal has not turned into a rout. It could have been a lot worse had the White House failed to put pressure on the Federal Reserve to lower the discount rate and relieve the downward pressure.

Nevertheless, the record one-day 61.87 drop in the Dow Jones, which wiped some $74 billion off equity value, may well prove a turning point for the market. Unlike other sharp Wall Street reversals in recent months, this plummet had little to do with "triple witching" — the computer-based programme selling which has become a feature of the third Friday of each quarter as futures and options expire.

On this occasion the stock market was acting as it should: as an important leading economic indicator. In the same way as it predicted an economic recovery in late 1982 (and has hardly looked back) it is now signalling a slowdown this year which could carry on through 1987. Stock market values, a revered Wall Street financier once observed, reflect "everything everybody knows, hopes, believes, anticipates, with all that knowledge sifted down to the bloodless verdict of the marketplace."

So it was last week as Wall Street got back to work after the long July 4 holiday. The market quickly found itself confronted with a range of new information. Trusted stock market watchers, notably John Mendelson of Dean Witter Reynolds, who have been unashamed bulls, became uncomfortable with the Dow's uninhibited surge this year.

In Washington, the Supreme Court, which has no master except itself, decided to issue its Gramm-Rudman-Hollings decision (originally prepared last month but held back in pique over a news leak) crippling the deficit reduction law. Add to this combustible mixture indications of divisions in the Federal Reserve over interest rates and the market exploded downwards.

None of this was that surprising. There has been talk about a so-called "correction" for some time, the Gramm-Rudman decision was widely anticipated and the debate over interest rates and their impact on the dollar had been well telegraphed. But when any market has a head of steam it is hard to bring it to a halt. It took the Plaza meeting last October to bring the dollar back from fantasyland.

The New York Stock Exchange has also been living out a fantasy. Despite a nearly 40 per cent rise in share value since last September (and a doubling in four years), which boosted the wealth of investors by more than $1,000 billion, the new riches have not been used to raise capital for investment. Rather, they have been dissipated in megamergers (which seem destined to fall apart) and new share issues which have meant little more than a reshuffling of assets.

The classic example of this was the $1.2 billion flotation in May, as share prices were moving to their peak, of the Henley Group — the largest single new issue in American financial history. Despite its posh name, Henley bears more resemblance to the Slater Walker enterprises of the 1970s than the elegant Thameside town.

Henley is a rag bag made up of some 35 or so small companies which were once part of Allied and Signal, two conglomerates involved in a $5 billion plus merger last year. In the last financial year these prize subsidiaries made loss of $64.5 million and the Henley prospectus warned investors that the company would continue to have "net losses."

Despite this inauspicious beginning, Wall Street couldn't get enough of the issue. Indeed, so popular was the idea with the institutions that the issuing houses, who had originally intended a $200 million or $500 million launch, eventually settled for an amazing $1.2 billion. What investors were said to be buying was the managerial skills of its chairman Michael Dingham, variously described as an investing and management genius.

The value of the Henley story is that it describes the state of New York Equity market in the weeks leading to last week's setback. It was a market where there was supreme confidence that share prices could only rise no matter what the fundamental earnings prospects of a particular investment or the economy. Like the dollar, it needed bringing back to earth.

The evidence of a weaker economy and weaker earnings prospects for American industry has been around for some time. The conventional wisdom has always been that the second half of the year would be better than the first as the benefits of a falling dollar on the US trade performance and the lower oil price began to be felt more sharply.

But analysts failed to take enough note of the so-called "J-curve" effect under which trade balances deteriorate before they get better. As a result, as the economy enters the second half of the year the nation's 52 leading economists — designated the blue chip group — envisage growth for the year at 2.5 per cent against 2.8 just a month ago and are shaving their 1987 forecasts, too. Even the White House will be trimming back its buoyant projection of 4 per cent growth when it releases its mid-year forecast in the next few weeks.

This is not to suggest that the US economy is moving into recession. It has several things going for it; a lower oil price, the latest drop in interest rates and the eventual turn in the trade deficit which will help both manufacturing and agriculture. Furthermore, both the White House and the Federal Reserve appear determined to hold off recession as the discount rate cut demonstrated.

But it is not clear how much the US monetary authorities can do on their own. While lower interest rates might stimulate consumer demand there is a limit to the amount of interest rate cutting that can be done without setting off recession, as the discount rate dollar.

Further, there must be risk that a looser monetary policy will be largely offset by a tighter fiscal policy as the Congress moves to cut the budget and reform taxes. The front end loading of tax reform together with the removal of such business incentives as the investment tax credit, the 10 per cent bonus given for buying new plant and equipment, is likely to be a downer.

Nevertheless, having got the Henley syndrome out of its system the stock market appeared in recent days to be taking a more realistic view of economic prospects. With some of the froth removed it will now bear close watching as a barometer of economic prospects.

Lange under fire for 'sordid deal'

By Ian Templeton In Wellington

THE New Zealand Government came under heavy attack last week for accepting the UN mediation of the Rainbow Warrior affair. The Prime Minister, Mr David Lange, who made it clear that he felt that New Zealand had been vindicated, appeared surprised at the strong public reaction to the release of the two gaoled French secret agents.

The Opposition sought to censure the Government in Parliament, while some of the country's leading newspapers criticised the transfer of the agents to French territory, in return for reparations of nearly £5 million as a "sordid transaction" and a "blot on the Government's record."

The Opposition foreign affairs spokesman, Sir Robert Muldoon, accused Mr Lange of being the "guilty man, who blustered and postured" for month after month playing for votes on latent xenophobia. The Government had collapsed like a "pricked balloon" after saying that it would not, and must not, interfere.

Sir Robert also claimed that the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Geoffrey Palmer, had spent three hours in the Cabinet arguing against referring the dispute to UN arbitration.

Mr Palmer told Parliament that there had been no doubt that New Zealand had a very serious dispute with France which could not be resolved. New Zealand had attempted to negotiate a settlement and that had failed and any country had a duty in that situation to seek a peaceful solution. New Zealand's position had been vindicated in the arbitrations, he said.

Mr Lange insisted that it was a signal achievement for New Zealand to gain an unqualified and comprehensive apology from France. "We are satisfied with the outcome and we hope that the equitable and principled ruling of the Secretary-General in this case will encourage other countries to seek similar solutions to their disputes."

Despite conflicting interpretations of Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar's decree, diplomats note that it is in line with the terms New Zealand requested. New Zealand had acknowledged that the law provides for the deportation of foreign prisoners, and diplomatic circles regard the settlement of the dispute as to New Zealand's advantage.

But the New Zealand Herald, the country's largest paper, accused the government of buckling in the face of outrageous behaviour by France, "the so-called republic of liberty, equality and fraternity, which might be better rendered as mendacity, perfidity and effrontery."

It added: "Having wronged New Zealand abominably, and having seen their agents collect what France itself might have meted out in similar circumstances, the French thereupon acted as though New Zealand were in the wrong and applied screws to our trade. . . ."

(Le Monde, page 13)

Ukrainians seal 7000 affected wells

By Martin Walker In Moscow

THE Soviet authorities have finally begun to acknowledge the scale of the threat of Chernobyl radiation contaminating the water supplies of vast tracts of the Ukraine.

Pravda revealed last week that 7,000 wells in the region of Bragin, over 50 miles north of Chernobyl, have been hermetically sealed. Plans to take a small group of Western journalists to Chernobyl itself, which had been in preparation for three weeks, have now been abandoned "indefinitely." The trip had been planned to show off the success of Soviet scientists in coping with the Chernobyl disaster.

Soviet press and television are still scouring the region for optimistic stories of the Chernobyl clean-up operation, but each morsel of good news somehow lets slip the scale of the bad.

Pravda's story of seven evacuated villages in the area of Bragin being ready for their inhabitants to return brought forth the sobering news that another 41 villages in the area, well to the north of the original evacuation zone, are still too dangerous to be reoccupied, even after two months of steady work by the decontamination crews.

A report that farming had begun once more inside the original 30-kilometre evacuation zone also made it clear that the work was being done by hurriedly modified tractors, whose cabs were hermetically sealed against the radiation dust.

A feature on the concern for safety at food processing plants in the Kiev region, almost 100 miles south of Chernobyl, revealed that all such factories, from bakeries to milk bottling plants, are now linked to emergency wells that have been sunk deep into the city's bedrock.

A vast new water supply system for the city's 3.5 million inhabitants is now being hurriedly put into place, with two pipelines, each four miles long, bringing water from the Desna river, well removed from the contaminated Pripjat river which feeds into the Kiev reservoirs.

The Desna river, which rises near Moscow, enters the city of Kiev from the east, and well south of the huge reservoir known as the Sea of Kiev into which the Pripjat river feeds.

Vast construction works are under way around the Chernobyl reactor zone. Huge earth dykes have been bulldozed beside the Pripjat, to stop the autumn floods washing radiation into the river. And in an interview with Tass, the Ukrainian Minister for Special Projects, Vladimire Borisovsky, said that a complex system of boreholes and barriers is being built around the station to stop underground streams getting into the zone where they could pick up radioactive particles.

The scale of Kiev's new water supply system is colossal. So far, 52 of a planned 58 artesian wells have been sunk in and around Kiev, from 500 to 1,000 feet in depth, to draw uncontaminated water from bedrock.

The new pipelines have been laid in record time across the roads, bridges, tunnels, and in some stretches, under water. The object is to install the new water supply before the autumn, when the heavy rains and floods could overload the flimsy defences around the radiation zone.

Meanwhile, Soviet scientists have developed a drug which reduces the effects of radiation by protecting the outer membrane of living cells, Tass said. The agency said clinical research had shown that the drug, Dibunol, cut radiation effects by one-third.

Quoting Professor Yelena Bukova of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, it said Dibunol contained bio-antioxidants which protected cell membranes from "unfavourable external effects," preventing cell mutation and the eventual death of the cells. The report described the drug as a synthesised preparation.

Le Duan, Vietnam veteran

By Nicholas Cumming-Bruce In Bangkok

VIETNAM'S 79-year-old leader Le Duan, died in Hanoi last week after a career at the centre of the struggle to produce an independent, unified state which brought 40 years of war against France and the US.

The Government ordered five days of mourning for Le Duan, who inherited leadership of Vietnam's Communist Party from Ho Chi Minh in 1969. He died after what Hanoi Radio described only as "a period of serious illness," but was throught to have been suffering from lung and kidney ailments.

A prolonged absence from public activity because of ill-health earlier this year had led to speculation that he would step down at the Sixth Congress of the party, expected before the end of the year.

His death is not expected to have any impact on the foreign or security policies pursued by a government still dominated by septuagenarians — Truong Chinh, the Prime Minister, Pham van Dong, Le Duc Tho, and the Defence Minister, Van Tien Dung.

But it may have a bearing on the outcome of a fierce debate now being waged at all levels of the party on how to tackle an economic crisis that has helped to keep Vietnam impoverished, backward, and incapable of satisfying the yearnings of a younger generation not attuned to the discipline of the war.

Inability to reach a consensus on the appropriate remedies appears to have been the main factor delaying the party congress originally planned for early this year.

Le Duan's career had started nearly six decades earlier when in his teens he had become active in the Indochinese Communist Party, forerunner of the Vietnamese Communist Party, only to be gaoled by the French for five years in 1931 and again in 1940.

After the second world war, Le Duan helped to build a party organisation in the south until his recall to Hanoi in 1954, when he emerged as one of the closest aides to Ho Chi Minh.

Even after his return to the north, however, Le Duan remained closely involved in formulating the north's strategy in the south from the formation of the National Liberation Front and the decision to commit the north's army to the war, to the 1968 Tet offensive, which he helped to plan, and the 1972 invasion of the south.

Lessons for us from the gulag

THIS week, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, is due to visit Britain. This encounter he will have with British politicians is supposed to be our contribution to the improvement of East-West relations in anticipation of another Reagan-Gorbachev summit. But the visit, as it happens, was preceded by a television film which could have a jarring impact on these expectations.

The film, The Nuclear Gulag, is the first I am aware of which contains footage, clandestinely shot, of Soviet penal institutions. It is certainly the first to publish the testimony of eyewitnesses and victims who have done time in Soviet uranium mines. From the point of view of publicists for Gorbachov and his new-look Soviet Union, it is a deeply and memorably unhelpful piece of work.

Television has great power, and even with meagre resources this film exerts it to the full. We are taken on a guided tour, for example, of a prison at Vladimir, 40 miles east of Moscow. Nicholas Sharegin, a prisoner there in the 1970s, points out the punishment block, the machine-gun towers, refugee from the nuclear gulag to have spoken. He names the KGB lieutenant, Ordovy Chienko, who warned him before he left that "whatever you tell western people about your experiences we will firstly deny, and secondly we will undertake everything to eliminate you."

The denials will no doubt now begin. And a question does arise about precisely when the bits of film were shot; the witnesses' own experiences date variously from the sixties and seventies. Some, however, are located firmly in the 1980s, like that of Pastor Walter, and another Baptist pastor, Nicolai Krapov, imprisoned at the Shevchenko uranium mine until 1983.

What is beyond doubt is that all this testimony relates to the post-Stalin era. There is no possibility of pretending that it is dead history. It will take more evidence and persuasive eloquence than the Soviet Union has previously exhibited to dispel the conviction which these brave men convey: that the experiences of which they speak remain embedded, secretly and horribly, in the Soviet police state.

By Hugo Young

and describes a regime under which he felt "even worse degraded as a human being than when I was in a German camp during the war."

Many victims of the gulag are there because they have declined to give up religious practice. We know this well enough from Solzhenitsyn. But these bursts of grainy, amateurish film convey the reality still more poignantly.

We witness the end of Samuel Walter, a pastor of a Pentecostal group in eastern Siberia persecuted for refusing to register their church and submit to state supervision. In 1984 Pastor Walter went into hospital for an operation on his varicose veins and came out as a corpse, apparently murdered by the KGB.

The film of his funeral is unbearably affecting. The funeral party is seen trudging through the heavy snow, the body on a simple cart, the mourners rough-clothed and numerous, each bending to kiss the pastor's face, all the while a shaky camera recording the forbidden scene.

The persecution of unregistered churches is among the vilest and most senseless aspects of the Soviet tyranny. We know about it, and yet are so rarely compelled to think about it. What we did not have at first hand, until now, was visual documentation of the exploitation of prisoners in the uranium mines.

Among many heroic if pitiable characters the film depicts, the most riveting is Herman Hartfeld, now a clergyman in Zurich. Until 1974, Hartfeld was pastor of an unregistered Baptist church in Kazakhstan. Before that he was sentenced to five years, initially in a uranium mine and then in a reprocessing factory.

The prisoners, including Hartfeld, were subjected to massive and reckless doses of radiation. He describes them: "They were aware they were dying of leukaemia, even cancer or tuberculosis and so on. They were exhausted, very tired, they couldn't eventually move or walk, and they became so thin they looked like shadows of persons."

Pastor Hartfeld eventually slipped through the net to the west, and is the first known

What response can a free westerner make? A Reaganite may see this evidence as a logical reason to intensify the cold war, decline to do business with Gorbachev, even cut off relations. But that does not seem a constructive reaction. The gulag is built too deeply into the Soviet system to be susceptible to that form of pressure, which could, in any case, impose such heavy cost on the stability of the East-West balance.

Should there then be economic sanctions? Some will draw a parallel with South Africa, and ask why the pressure on Moscow is so slight, compared with that on Pretoria. But the parallel is hardly exact. Moscow already exists under massive sanction — that of the West's military threat — which South Africa in no way faces. Our mark of disgust is provided by this outward sign of enmity. Moreover, in vulnerability to sanctions, there is no comparison between the closed Soviet economy and an economy like South Africa's which must make terms with the world financial system.

Our response to the gulag, in fact, cannot but be inadequate. But it need not be non-existent. To remember and contemplate is something. Likewise to vow in most solemn oaths never to accommodate even the smallest traces of totalitarianism in our own country. Above all, perhaps, the slow breaking-down of the gulag depends on the breaking-down of international suspicion, the beginning of which may be accomplished by the spreading of as much truth here about Russia as about the West in the Soviet Union. In this sense, The Nuclear Gulag makes a valuable pair with Real Lives, which the BBC presented last winter.

It ends with a powerful image. The 27th Congress of the CPSU is assembled. The Internationale is blaring. Gorbachev stands as the new ikon of acceptable socialist realism. Over this the halting voice of Pastor Hartfeld is heard: "Maybe there are reasons that people get tired to listen from the dissidents who come out of Russia. But maybe it will come the time that western society will be accused of not having listened to them."

Tacit US deal seen in Syrian move into Beirut

THE return of Syrian troops to West Beirut four years after the Israeli invasion forced them out has opened a new chapter in Lebanon. But what exactly that chapter holds — barring a much-needed breathing space for the Muslim sector — the Lebanese themselves are not sure.

Even Syria's so-called "allies" in West Beirut are worried. "For now, we feel that the Syrians are here to help," says a prominent Moslem politician. "We don't know what will happen in the future."

The presence of the 200-300 "special forces" commandos, armed with nothing heavier than rocket-propelled grenades, has in itself made very little difference to the reality of West Beirut.

For months now the militia bosses of West Beirut have been spending almost as much time in Damascus as in their own constituencies. The head of the Syrian "Observer Force" established here last year has been participating in the decision-making of West Beirut through its "ministerial committee," the Muslim half of the dead-but-not-buried National Unity cabinet. Hundreds of plain-clothed Syrian agents have been overseeing the city day by day and street by street.

West Beirut's latest security plan, the stated reason for the Special Forces' despatch, had been working smoothly for a week before the Syrian soldiers stepped in. The appearance of the Special Forces is, above all, a political statement —, and a statement which most Lebanese believe could not have been made without the tacit agreement, at the very least, of the United States and its regional allies.

"From now on, West Beirut is not going to be allowed to be a jungle to be used against the French and other Westerners," says a leading political commentator. "It is part of a deal to finish with terrorism in West Beirut. The Americans get the head of terrorism and the price is a pro-Syrian settlement."

This interpretation of events is certainly not contradicted either by the reaction of the United States and Israel — who are "following developments closely," without criticism thus far, despite recent statements linking Damascus to international terrorism — or

By Julie Flint
In Beirut

by the first-time support given to the security plan by the pro-Iranian Hezbollah party.

Before the Syrian troops moved in, a rapprochement between France and Iran, based on a significant change in France's Gulf War policy, had opened the way for the release of two of the nine French hostages missing in the Lebanon. There is now word that a third may be released in the near future.

Iran, the argument goes, has achieved the aim of its terrorism in Beirut. The lee-way accorded to Syria will now depend on its ability to ease the problem of the American hostages and to contain, at the very least, "terrorists" — first and foremost Syrian President Assad's own sworn enemy, PLO chairman Yasser Arafat, but also the Muslim fundamentalists, who, according to Israeli reports have taken a qualitative step forward in the South Lebanon resistance movement with the acquisition of Sagger anti-tank missiles.

Outside the limited framework of West Beirut, a large question mark hangs over the political steps Syria can now be expected to take to reassert its authority in the wider Lebanon.

Damascus's allies in West Beirut are hoping — with more than a touch of anxiety — that Syria, having pushed them into a total boycott of President Gemayel, will now "punish" Gemayel, for his rejection last December of a national peace plan drawn up under Syrian auspices.

Some express the belief that Gemayel "is now in the same camp as Yasser Arafat — someone with whom the Syrians will not deal."

Others go so far as to suggest that Syria favours a transitional military cabinet to run Lebanon with the president as a figurehead until his term expires in 1988. The reality may, in the end, be very different.

President Gemayel himself has not reacted officially to the Syrian move. After using the device of a "responsible source" to criticise Syria's ommission to consult Lebanese "legitimacy," Gemayel has now been quoted directly as saying: "Had the authorities been consulted, their attitude might have been different."

The trend, however, is towards detente — not renewed confrontation. A security committee from both sides of the capital has met for the third time this year to discuss "cooling down" the mid-city Green Line and re-opening its crossing points. Many Christian leaders have given timid approval to the Syrians' entry, while Muslim leaders have toned down their attacks on the presidency.

Hussein's men can't help West Bank

JORDAN'S decision to close down 25 offices belonging to Mr Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah guerrilla organisation in Amman and elsewhere in the country is a grievous blow to the PLO leader at a time when he has yet to recover from a series of political setbacks that have left him weaker than ever before.

The Jordanian move is the culmination of several months of tension since King Hussein announced last February that he was breaking off political cooperation with the PLO over the organisations refusal—or inability — to accept United Nations resolutions implying recognition of Israel, and thus pave the way for possible Middle East peace talks.

The decision, naturally enough, has been greeted by Israeli leaders as a move in the right direction, and there is now some evidence that King Hussein may have first asked Jerusalem to crack down on pro-PLO forces in the occupied West Bank and to encourage his own supporters to come out of their closets.

But if Jordan and Israel are pleased with themselves, the 1.3 million Palestinians who live in the West Bank and Gaza have every reason to regret this latest development. For far from improving the chances of breaking up the log-jam of creeping annexation and periodic escalation, it has come as a grave setback, in the medium term at least.

From February 1985 to February 1986, the lifespan of the Amman Accord on a joint negotiating strategy between Jordan and the PLO, the people of the occupied territories were able to maintain their precarious balance on a tightrope stretched tautly over an abyss of violence and uncertainty.

With King Hussein and Mr Arafat working in tandem, however uneasily, things could actually move on the ground. Late last year, with the approval of both sides, Mr Zafer Al-Masri, a widely respected businessman, replaced the Israeli army officer running the municipal affairs of Nablus, the largest town on the West Bank and a traditional stronghold of Palestinian nationalism.

Mr Masri's brief term was perhaps the single most important result of the short-lived accord. It may not have brought self-determination for his people any closer, but at least a semblance of order

By Ian Black
In Jerusalem

was restored to a city accustomed to finding its rubbish piling up in the streets because of the absence of cash to pay the bills. It was a sign, both locally and regionally, of what could happen if men of goodwill could make rational decisions.

But in March, shortly after the king's now famous call for the PLO leaders to become "men of their word," Mr Masri was gunned down by a hit squad said to be working for the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine: the message was clear — anyone cooperating with Jordanian plans — and Israel's, by extension — would meet a similar fate.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the first casualty of the Jordanian decision was a plan to appoint some of the king's men in the West Bank to replace the Israelis running three other large municipalities. The candidate to take over Hebron denied last week that he had ever even considered such a move.

PLO supporters in the West Bank, who dominate the press, the professional associations, and the universities, were quick to condemn the Jordanian move, but said they were not surprised since it followed a series of recent attempts by King Hussein to crack down on Fatah activists both in Jordan itself and in the occupied territories.

Supporters of Jordan, though, were far more circumspect in their reactions, an indication of the fact that the decision has put them very much on the spot: in this new situation of bitter and open confrontation, any open expression of loyalty to Amman will imply opposition to the PLO. Mr Al-Masri's ghost is a warning to them all.

In 1967, when the Israeli army took advantage of King Hussein's fatal mistake in joining President Nasser's war, and overran half his little kingdom, the West Bank was undergoing a process of "Jordanisation" — integration, that is, between two halves of a country where, since 1948, the Palestinians had always been a truculent and restive minority whose unfulfilled national aspirations could threaten the stability of the whole.

In almost 20 years of Israeli rule, that process has been halted and reversed. The West Bank, squeezed for so long between the hammer of Jerusalem and the anvil of Amman, is all that is left of home for the vast bulk of the Palestinian people. Mr Arafat, not King Hussein, is their representative, and it is hard — precisely because Jordan has now struck such a blow against the PLO — to imagine that this basic fact will change.

The backwardness of Mother Russia

By Martin Walker in Moscow

THERE are some things about the Soviet Union that make me so angry I want to go and pelt the Kremlin with radioactive tomatoes. The latest infuriation is the cotton wool shortage.

This is not simply for the selfish reason that our family includes an infant who still wears nappies. It is because this vast continent of a country, this second most powerful economy in the world, does not produce tampons. And if it does manufacture sanitary towels they are virtually impossible to find, even in privileged Moscow.

In a country of almost 280 million people, that means getting on for a hundred million women are of childbearing age. At any given time some ten million of them are menstruating. At a time of cotton wool shortage, what in the name of the Tsar of all Russia are they supposed to do about it?

The discomforts and humiliations to which this leads are bad enough. But it is worse than just a social and economic failure to provide for an elementary need of half the population. It is, in the plainest sense, an insult to Soviet women.

Nor is this spasmodic shortage of cotton wool an isolated example of a generally lamentable attitude towards women. This is a country where the standard form of birth control is abortion.

If you are lucky or well connected, you can obtain Hungarian and East German contraceptive pills. If you have had a child already, you can get fitted for an inter-uterine device. Some diaphragms are available, but one women doctor of my acquaintance, says: "They come in two sizes — too big or too small." And in the absence of spermicide creams, their reliablility is sharply reduced.

There are condoms, and having examined the kind that are issued to Soviet soldiers, I can confirm the troops' suspicion that they are meant to double as galoshes or rainproof overtrousers. I would not be surprised to learn that they are bulletproof. The ones produced for the civilian market, Soviet friends tell me, will certainly tear during use, even if they are not holed already.

As a result, I was not in the least surprised to see that the London Rubber Corporation's profits soared since I first came to Moscow. Every time I return, I cram the corners of my suitcase with packets of their gossamer products to pass on to my Russian chums. It also secures me the most awed glances as my baggage is searched at Soviet customs, but that is by the way.

It is not easy to fathom why all this should be. A centrally planned economy, whose constitution gave women full legal rights rather earlier than most of the world, ought to be able to produce sufficient contraceptive and sanitary equipment to cater for the needs of its citizens.

Western cartoonists traditionally caricature frumpish Russian women cleaning the streets, building the roads and performing every kind of manual labour. They should not. This was largely the result of the war, and the desperate losses among men of working age.

What is more significant is the way that those professional jobs that women have come to dominate, and they provide three-quarters of the doctors and two-thirds of the teachers, have suffered a sharp fall in status. They are among the lowest paid groups of Soviet society, earning about 70 per cent of the average industrial wage.

We are starting now to get the odd feminist stirring in Russia. The brave group of women in Leningrad who published the first feminist Samizdat magazine have been exiled, but their cause goes on. At the recent Congress of the Writers' Union, women asked why so few of them were represented on the ruling body, and indeed the poetess Bella Akhmadulina is now a secretary of the union.

Similar calls at the last party congress led to the election of Alexandra Bryukova as a full secretary of the Central Committee, the most powerful woman in Soviet life for a generation. Perhaps the second most powerful if the widespread rumours of Raisa Gorbachev's influence on cultural reform are to be believed. But until you can buy Tampax anywhere in the country, I will remain sceptical of claims that the time of Soviet woman has come.

Israel denies impropriety

By Mark Tran
In Washington

ISRAEL has reacted furiously to allegations that it may have tried to smuggle US technology needed to make cluster bombs. The Israeli Defence Ministry expressed "astonishment" at the charges and said that, "they were likely to damage Israel's good name without justification and hurt the good relations between the US and Israel."

The Defence Minister, Mr Yitzhak Rabin, said that Israel had legally bought equipment from the US to build its own cluster bombs. He said: "All we requested, and we requested it in the most formal way, is equipment to produce (the bombs) that we could have obtained in Europe as well."

Federal authorities have subpoenaed eight Israelis — who do not have diplomatic immunity — and 12 American executives and seized large amounts of documents. The Israelis in question work in New York for Israeli Military Industries, a branch of the Israeli Defence Ministry.

End of seal cull urged

By Clyde Sanger,
In Ottawa

AFTER an inquiry that was ordered nearly two years ago into the hunting of seals and the sealing industry in Canada, a Royal Commission has recommended the permanent end of the killing of whitecoats or seal pups.

At the same time the commission has held that the methods of killing seals by clubbing their heads to crush the skull is now less humane than practices that are authorised in slaughterhouses.

It has also recommended that the Canadian Government spends $100 million, half of it in cash, to compensate the 7,000 or more sealers for the collapse of this East Coast industry and the rest to develop new sources of income for them.

The annual seal hunt began to draw strong protests about 10 years ago from animal welfare groups. These protests included clashes with hunters on ice floes when the protesters sprayed live seal pups with coloured dyes to spoil the pelts.

Rickover, father of US nuclear navy

By Alex Brummer in Washington

ADMIRAL Hyman Rickover, the cantankerous and brilliant father of America's nuclear navy, died last week at his Arlington, Virginia, home, at the age of 86. When he was forced into retirement by the Naval Secretary, Mr John Lehman, in 1982, Admiral Rickover was the US's longest serving naval officer, having spent more than 60 years in uniform.

As the first US naval officer to recognise the strategic potential of nuclear-powered ships, Admiral Rickover has long been assured of a hallowed place in naval history. His value to the US Navy in the twentieth century has often been compared to that of George Melville in the nineteenth century, who supervised the US navy's switch to steam power.

In his later years Admiral Rickover became a strong critic of both nuclear weapons and nuclear power. In a statement issued last week, his only son, Mr Robert Rickover, said that the admiral never wavered in his belief that "nuclear weapons and power should be scrapped," otherwise they would lead to the destruction of the world. He once told Congress that the world would be a safer place if the whole nuclear navy were sunk.

It was, however, through Rickover's efforts and engineering skills that nuclear power became the main propulsion for the US's submarine and carrier fleet which is the cutting edge of its strategic power game with the Soviet Union. While the Russians have the advantage in heavy land-based missiles, the US's fleet of nuclear submarines, currently being modernised with a new generation of Trident 2 submarines, remains the most important and secure leg of the US's strategic triad.

The young Hyman Rickover arrived in the US in 1906, at the age of six, a refugee from the Czarist pogroms against the Jews. He settled with his parents in Chicago where he attended public schools. He fulfilled the all-American dream of immigration and liberty when he won a place at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, becoming an ensign on his graduation in 1922.

He developed an early interest in electrical engineering, which he studied at Annapolis and Columbia University in New York from which he took his Master of Science degree in 1929. He won his first command in 1937 when he was given a minesweeper. His specialised knowledge of electrical engineering caught the attention of his superiors and he was put in charge of the electrical division of the Navy's Department of Ships.

It was after the war that Rickover's star rose. In the second half of 1946 he became convinced of the military necessity of developing a nuclear-powered submarine. He won a new appointment as head of the Atomic Submarine Division of the Bureau of Ships and fought for his idea in the face of opposition from more traditional naval officers. His triumph, however, came in 1954 when the Nautilus, the world's first nuclear submarine, was launched.

Within a few months the Seawolf, a second nuclear submarine, put to sea and Rickover subsequently moved on to supervise construction of the first nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. In the mid-1980s, the US carrier force, which is the key to its power around the globe, is fully nuclear powered.

Admiral Rickover ran the nuclear navy with an iron fist. His interview techniques for future nuclear naval officers became legendary.

While still working on the nuclear navy, Admiral Rickover also helped to pioneer the peaceful use of nuclear power. He was put in charge of the Atomic Energy Commission and was among the key figures in developing the first nuclear power plant at Shippingsport, Pennsylvania.

Morality and the British Prime Minister

THERE is the sense now — just the merest, twitching thought — that Southern Africa may prove Mrs Margaret Thatcher's nemesis. At first sight the idea seems absurd. How can a reluctance to impose sanctions lose the Prime Minister favour with Conservative MPs? When did a matter of foreign policy — policy, not war — last lay a British leader low? Does the vast mass of the electorate, yawning towards its deckchairs, see steps against P. W. Botha as its top priority?

Yet, consider the Prime Minister this past week: a flurry of interviews — including a particularly emotional one with Hugo Young *(see page 4)*. The folly of sanctions, for Mrs Thatcher has suddenly become a burning, highly visible issue. She, personally, will not countenance them. She despises those who preach "morality" about the matter. She ridicules those who seek to change her mind. They are the "immoral" ones. Some, wise in the battered ways of politics, may see this as just another Thatcher ploy: the staking out of a position — convictions intact — until other more shopsoiled colleagues contrive to edge her off it. And who can say that, even now, that's impossible? There's a difference between the economic blockade the Prime Minister derides and the tiny basket of "measures" that may eventually be dragged forth. There's no ultimate reason why a dollop of fudge can't set her free: another twisting Commonwealth compromise: maybe even — who can tell? — a shred of success for the toiling Sir Geoffrey.

Concentrate, though, on what the Prime Minister is saying. She doesn't like apartheid. But she hates economic sanctions. They will wreck Africa's most developed economy. They will throw hundreds of thousands of black Africans out of work: and tens of thousands of them will starve. Those who call for such action from their padded chairs in Westminster or Fleet Street are devilish hypocrites. They inflict futile suffering on South Africa's blacks. Countries who press the Premier are hypocrites, too. They'll be trading away under some flag or other while Britain — vainly — attempts to do the decent thing. The cries and the speeches are hollow, self-serving stuff. She despises them.

Those — like this paper — who see the moral case for sanctions, ought to pause for a second here: for some of the points from Mrs Thatcher are points of substance. Economic sanctions will not bring South Africa to its knees: they will mean that black children starve: the desolation of the Pretoria economy would be a tragedy for all Africa: deceitful nations and entrepreneurs may well make a mint out of illicit trade.

Even so. The case the Prime Minister advances so passionately sticks in the throat. It isn't just Denis Healey who wants sanctions. Not just a cacophony of puling opposition voices, saying predictable things. It is Bishop Tutu, Archbishop Runcie, the Synod of the Church of England, Mr Nelson Mandela, Mr Oliver Tambo, President Kaunda, Prime Minister Mugabe, the Congress of the United States, the overwhelming weight of the United Nations, the sweep of the Commonwealth. Mr Mandela knows that his people may suffer and starve. He wants sanctions. Bishop Tutu knows of the pain that will be inflicted. He wants sanctions. Mr Mugabe's people will see their livelihoods lost in swathes of poverty. He wants sanctions. President Kaunda knows the sickening impact of sanctions on his landlocked, vulnerable country. He wants them nonetheless. Since when, pray, has Mrs Thatcher presumed to tell people of the Third World on what terms they shall eat? Has she been so moved by African poverty that she has devoted additional resources to ending it? Not a jot, until Bob Geldof shamed the politicians. Since when has Mrs Thatcher taken a lead in feeding the starving or finding jobs for those who have no prospects of one throughout Africa? She let the Brandt report pass by on the other side. She does not go to Africa. She journeys — when she must — to the emergent technologies of the Pacific Basin. How does she presume to tell Desmond Tutu or Kenneth Kaunda that they are deluded "immoral" fools? Where — in anything she says — is there a hint that (unlike Sir Geoffrey) she has felt the dead weight of Soweto in her soul? Where is the passion to respond to an injustice and an affront to mankind which can no longer be sustained or endured? One may disagree about policies, to be sure; but moral lectures to those at the core of the crisis seem frankly bizarre.

Will Sir Geoffrey find a wilted olive branch for P. W. somewhere in his baggage? Will the Commonwealth finally grant more time? Will the big cheeses of Europe haver and delay? They all may, for a while. But events have a momentum of their own — and unless you visualise the whites of South Africa voluntarily sharing and then handing over their power you can see only a dark pattern of years where, one by one, the nations of the world are going to have to choose on an issue of such emotion and such bitterness that old alliances — like the Commonwealth — must surely disintegrate under the strain. Today, in a tiny way, we see that happening with the Commonwealth Games. Mrs Thatcher herself has already made the choice. It is one — in the force of its expression, in the fullness of its scorn and certitude — that will not now be forgotten.

Interview, page 4

Laurence Cockcroft

Clearing the mind of cant about black rule

THE REAL struggle in South Africa is for black government, not constitutional democracy. The driving force of the nationalist movement in most of Africa — in the build up to independence — was the unremitting demand that black people should be governed by other black people. It was the departing French and British who attempted to make constitutional democracy a condition of black power, a principle which the first generation of nationalist leaders generally accepted in the struggle to achieve an independent government.

Similarly, the leaders of black South Africans, from Chief Buthelezi to Oliver Tambo, now speak the language of a search for a "democratic society," of equal rights for all men and women. This is a condition of maintaining some kind of broad front with other racial groups and with white liberals in South Africa, and of sustaining the international support which now exists for the imposition of sanctions.

Their adoption of this position as a political necessity obscures the likely reality of a black government in South Africa. The black South Africans rightly believe that they should constitute the predominant political power in the Republic, justified by their vast preponderance of numbers. The Freedom Charter of 1955, initiated by the ANC but historically supported on a broad front (most recently by the UDF), states: "All people shall have equal right to use their own languages, and to develop their own folk culture and customs."

A cursory reading of Amnesty International's annual report would confirm that such rights are only intermittently available in much of black Africa. Any constitutional framework designed to protect minority groups (such as whites and Indians) will almost certainly be principally a means to the end of political power for representatives of the majority.

On the other hand the Western liberal argument frequently entertains a vision of, first, "an end of apartheid" and, second, the introduction of yet another special constitution in which there is a balance of power between the communities and a political evolution of the black community. Majority rule might occur at some conveniently futuristic date.

Arguments about what kind of sanctions towards South Africa are possible and desirable are much more easily resolved if the doublespeak on the part of both nationalist blacks and liberal whites is ignored. The fact of the matter is that one day (in the 1990s?) there is going to be a black government in South Africa which will tolerate the presence of minority races and work out some modus vivendi with them — as has occurred on a smaller but comparable basis in Kenya and Zimbabwe.

Such a government will almost certainly not uphold the traditions of constitutional democracy and it is very likely to manifest the characteristics of governments in the rest of the continent: it will be authoritarian, dominated by representatives of particular tribal groups, and will find it difficult to arrange a constitutional transition from one leader to another. There are good reasons — which do nothing to justify white South African attitudes, and which have a lot to do with the white partition of Africa — why these political problems are part of the current black heritage. They cannot be wished away.

In considering sanctions, therefore, the rest of the world has to make up its mind on the key question: is a repetition of the political mess which has occurred in the rest of Africa more acceptable in South Africa than the continuation of white authoritarian rule? The answer lies in the view one takes of fundamental relations between the races: racial differences either are, or are not, acceptable as the basis for determining the allocation of political power.

In western and eastern Europe, in north America, and now in many important parts of the Third World, it is not acceptable. On the other hand the political problems of black Africa, grave as they are, can be seen as part of a long historical struggle in which there is the possibility of real progress. The return to democratic forms of government in Latin America over the past five years is an indication of the ways in which bleak years of military rule can turn into better ones.

Black government in South Africa is both inevitable and preferable to the continuance of the present regime in any form. It follows that the elaborate construction of a "middle way" facilitated by the black leadership's public commitment to minority rights and by the liberal rhetoric of sanctions designed only to "end apartheid" is a mirage. It is this mirage of the "middle way" which makes it possible to argue that a refusal to buy South African fruit and vegetables or suspend airline flights might make a difference.

If we really want to hasten inevitable historical processes in South Africa we should go for all-out sanctions: the suspension of oil supplies, a total trade embargo, and a total investment embargo.

Finally, we have to wake up to the reality of armed conflict. It was the success of guerrilla fighters in Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe which finally caused the end of white rule in those countries. In Zimbabwe the desperate attempt to create a government of the middle way under Bishop Muzorewa could not survive the reality of vast popular support for Robert Mugabe and his hard fighting section of the Patriotic Front. Guerrilla fighters in all three conflicts were supplied primarily from the countries of Eastern Europe and China, a fact which was consistently deplored by western governments.

There is no reason to suppose that this pattern of outside eastern bloc support for guerrilla activity will not continue. There is every reason to believe that its long-term impact will be consistently underrated by the West on the grounds of the "massiveness" of the South African military machine, a point which always underrates the "massiveness" of black commitment — transparently clear from all TV coverage of recent months.

The liberal interest in "ending apartheid" cannot then stop at that point. It has to decide its position on guerrilla war and whether or not it will seek to resist Communist support for guerrillas on the grounds that it is an expansion of the cold war. If it is not to resist it, why not support it?

Laurence Cockcroft is SDP/Liberal Alliance prospective parliamentary candidate for Halifax.

No-win situation

ARE Britain's teachers really as dotty as they sometimes seem? Maybe it's just the annual silly season in the media but, all of a sudden, it appears that teachers have decided that school sports are undesirable and subversive. Inner London Schools are trying to stamp out the First XI mentality by stopping inter-school football matches. Cricket is seemingly all but extinct within the state system. Rugby cannot be mentioned within politically correct society. Now even the egg-and-spoon race has been banned from a Bristol infants school because it is too competitive. There must be no winners and no losers in our schools today. And, in a novel twist which Lewis Carroll didn't think of when he pioneered this approach, not even any prizes either.

The effects of all this are obvious. International sports success will soon be beyond the British. You can kiss goodbye to the hope of seeing a national team winning a test match, getting anywhere in the World Cup, or ever defeating the All Blacks. A British winner at Wimbledon? Sorry. And, as for British success at the highest level in egg-and-spoon races; no chance. Perhaps this is actually part of the aim of the teachers. Perhaps they positively don't want to see Britain winning. There's a lot of that attitude about, too. But, if so, it's all a horrible miscalculation, as usual. They reckon without the insatiable public appetite for sport which the television channels are elbowing one another to satisfy. People will want to see the national teams and the club teams just as before. The difference is that, once again, just like a century ago, the teams will be full of public school pupils.

In fact, of course, the anti-sports policy isn't carefully thought out at all. It is a combination of two attitudes which originally were both positive and liberal but which, today, in the hands of ideologues and twits, have become negative and repressive. The first is the notion that comprehensive schools exist primarily to help low achievers at the expense of the high. Hence the hostility to school teams, First XIs and, above all, to winning and to worldly success. The second is anti-sexism, which in this case seems to mean hostility to anything which a lot of boys do together. Permeating both attitudes is the intellectually pathetic delusion that the schools exist to produce equality and an acceptance of the view that ability is only okay if it is indistinguishability.

Let's leave aside the fact that the anti-team sports, anti-competitive policies are actually rather racist (because they prevent activities which a lot of black children are specially keen on). The real objections to the policy are that it is the very opposite of what a comprehensive approach ought to offer and that, unchallenged, it can invade whole areas of school teaching apart from PE. It is hostile to the comprehensive idea precisely because, far from encouraging people to fulfil their potential, it aims to prevent them doing so. That is a truly pernicious approach and no education authority worth its salt ought to pander to the stupid teachers who support it.

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

Terrorist bomb strikes at the heart of Government policy

An explosive charge of about ten kilograms went off on Wednesday afternoon last week in an annexe of the Paris criminal investigation department *Police Judiciaire* killing one police officer and injuring a score of others. Chief Divisional Inspector Marcel Basdevant, 54, married and the father of two children, was apparently killed instantaneously when the explosion sent a heavy concrete beam crashing down on him. The explosion took place in an office on the fourth floor of the building. Basdevant was the most senior officer of the Brigade de répression du banditisme, which specialises in tracking down gangsters.

APART FROM BEING a contemptible act, the bomb attack carried out on the premises of the Paris Police Judiciaire is a challenge, a provocation and a trap. It is a challenge to democracy, a provocation directed against public opinion and a trap for the nation's political leaders.

The challenge may be summed up simply — this is an unprecedented act. Even when the Algerian war was at its height, when first the FLN and later the OAS were battling with the police, and even less after May 1968 when feelings between a segment of the population and the law enforcement authorities were inflamed, nothing like this had happened.



** Plantu's cartoon shows interior minister Pasqua, dressed as a policeman, asking for the journalist's identity papers. The joke is a play on words. Literally translated he is also asking for the article the journalist is writing.*

True, police premises had already — and recently — come under attack. On May 24 there was a criminal attack against a police station in the 11th arrondissement of Paris — a small explosion — accompanied by a sprayed message on the walls: "Insecurity, death to the cops." On May 16, Action Directe's international branch attacked the Saint-Cloud headquarters of Interpol. Going back further, on March 15, 1980 Action Directe set off a medium-sized bomb outside an annexe of the DST (Direction de la surveillance du territoire — the equivalent of the FBI).

But the context — the time and the circumstances — on these three occasions were different. All three took place at night and the bombs were placed outside the buildings.

This time it was a Paris police prefecture building; four floors of offices of inspectors specialising in combating organised crime. To plant such a powerful bomb in such conditions presupposed a hitherto unmatched determination. It was as if the authors want to signal to the government that from now on they could strike at the very heart, that nowhere was safe.

The challenge to the police, and through them to the government, is compounded by a provocative sense of opportunity. In one week, the security sphere has been shaken in all its aspects. An increased sense of insecurity: the spectacular hold-up of the Saint Nazaire branch of the Banque de France, where the raiders, describing themselves as "fantastic triggermen", inveighed against "the security policy of Pandore and Passequoi" (a pun on the names of Robert Pandraud, Minister responsible for Public Security and Charles Pasqua, Interior Minister); the killing of an auxiliary gendarme at Bollène in a hold-up by a criminal who turned out to be a municipal councillor.

Then there was the conflict between one of the most senior officers responsible for public security and his minister — the police prefect of Paris resigned when Pasqua made an unfortunate remark suggesting in effect that the officer in question might have lied on the orders of former Interior Minister Pierre Joxe. There is also the emotion, affecting police relations with the public, caused by the mistake on the Rue Mogador in Paris when a member of the CRS shot and killed a young driver as he ran away from his vehicle, which has shaken the image of policemen as protectors.

The series has been compounded by Wednesday's bomb blast, whoever was behind it — Action

By Edwy Plenel

Directe, terrorists from the Middle East, or lone bombers. Terrorism lives only through its impact on the public: destabilising by striking fear. So the risks of panicking are not minor. In the past, one small part of the police force did not hesitate to exploit a legitimate emotion to turn it against the leftwing government of the day.

There is also a risk of panicky reactions among the public who would be wrong to equate the behaviour of a single CRS man with that of the entire police force, which also has its democratic and republican traditions, such as are symbolised by its leading union. In this connection, did not Pasqua go beyond the bounds when, speaking in the National Assembly on Wednesday afternoon, he inveighed against the "so-called witnesses" who accused the CRS in the Rue Mogador incident and against what he described as the "one-sided presentation by the main media"? For this indictment was later taken up and amplified within the police service by extremists closer to Jean-Marie Le Pen (leader of the far right Front National) than the Rassemblement Pour la République, as if they had concluded that the way was now open for excesses. After all, was it not the FPIP, the extreme right-wing police union, which after Wednesday's bomb blast proclaimed that the "real instigators of this tragedy are all the men, women, journalists and politicians . . . who for some days now have been taking part in a campaign of disinformation"?

This is where the trap appears for the government. Public security is a tricky business where passions are liable to boil over quickly, where it is easy to fly off the handle. Now, although the task was a long haul, the new ruling Majority set itself a tall order as soon as it took office by announcing that insecurity was going to "change sides" rapidly, that from now on terrorists would be "terrorised", that the police would at last be able to do their work, as if they had stopped doing it before. By his nature and his search for publicity impact, Pasqua stepped up this mix of promises and expectations. Did he not write before March 16 that the right could "restore the confidence of the French in 30 days" and that "from the very first days" France needed to be given "shock treatment"?

Now, in this area for which he happens to be responsible, there are no miracle solutions. It is all rather a question of patience, tenacity and professionalism. And the fact is, 30 days were not enough to reverse the feeling of insecurity and the terrorist realities. Le Pen did not miss the chance: "These facts should prompt Mr Pasqua to be more modest," he said, "just his presence hasn't been enough to terrorise the terrorists". Nor was the Socialist Party terrorised. While saying it would refrain from making "any political capital" out of the situation, the Socialist Party's executive office formally criticised the "exaggerated declarations" made by officials at the Interior Ministry, "the spectacular but superficial deployment" of police forces and the "increased verifications (which have had) no effect on terrorism and banditry."

The government can get out of this difficult corner if it does not lose its head, if it urges calm and firmness, cool heads and determination and rejects verbal excesses, especially in the media. This is what the public and the police expect.

(July 11)

Barbie to face three charges of crimes against humanity

KLAUS BARBIE'S case is now ready to go before the courts. The former (1942 to 1944) head of Section IV of the Einsatzkommando in Lyons has been ordered by a Paris appeal court to stand trial at the Rhône district court.

The order rounds out the decision made on October 4, 1984 by a Lyons court which at the time took into consideration only Barbie's actions against Jews on the grounds that the accused's crimes, or alleged crimes, of torturing, deporting and killing Resistance fighters were war crimes, which are now prescribed, and not crimes against humanity which alone are imprescriptible in terms of the 1964 law.

It was this interpretation of Articles 6b and 6c of the Charter of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal that the Paris court censured when it examined appeals against the Lyons decision. The petitions had been filed by the League of Human Rights, several associations of deported persons and Resistance fighters, as well as Resistance activists in 1943 and 1944, as well as the deportation of those who were taken in the last trainload on August 11, 1944. The court based its decision on a distinction between a crime against humanity and a war crime.

"The perpetrator of the crime against humanity," the court found, "should have acted within the framework of his affiliation with a policy of ideological hegemony such as the Third Reich's National-Socialist ideology. This motive ought to be special, whereas the war crime requires only a reprehensible intention."

Accordingly, Jews and Resistance activists who were routinely persecuted in the name of a State practising this ideological hegemony — the former because of the fact of their belonging to a racial or religious group, the latter because of their opposition to this policy — could have been victims of crimes against humanity.

The court therefore decided that the death of Professor Gompel was indeed a crime against humanity.

By Jean-Marc Théolleyre

the widow of one of the victims, Nicole Gompel, whose husband was tortured to death. The Paris appeal court defined crimes against humanity as follows: "Inhuman acts and persecution which, in the name of a state practising a policy of ideological hegemony, have been systematically committed not only against people because of the fact of their belonging to racial or religious groups, but also against political opponents of this policy, whatever the form of their opposition."

From then on, the appeals court's task was to choose from among the actions set aside by the Lyons court those that could correspond to this definition. There were six such actions or series of actions:

1) The death of Police Commissaire (superintendent) Jules Cros, arrested in 1943 and tortured to death at the Fort Montluc in Lyons for having allowed four Resistance activists to escape;

2) The torturing and deporting of people in 1943 and 1944 because of their activities, real or alleged, in the Resistance, all of whom were deported before August 11, 1944;

3) The round-up carried out in the workshops of the SNCF at Oullins (Rhône) on August 9, 1944, during which one railway employee was executed and others arrested, though they were finally released;

4) The case of Régine Skorza, of Jewish origin, who was arrested on June 22, 1944 for an act of resistance and deported to Auschwitz;

5) The case of Professor Marcel Gompel, tortured to death at Montluc, in a place known as the "Jews' dump";

6) The deportation of Resistance activists who were taken away in a convoy that left Lyons on August 11, 1944 for Germany; it was the last such convoy from this city before the Liberation.

The Paris appeal court finally retained three of these accusations against Barbie — the continued torturing of Professor Gompel, the imprisonment and deportations of considering "it was an act of cruelty or persecution systematically committed for racial or religious reasons and as a part of the Nazi State's policy of ideological hegemony, which Klaus Barbie was aware of and approved."

On the question of the torture and deportation of persons in 1943 and 1944, the court held that, in the light of the survivors, torture while inflicted so as to obtain information fell within the scope of a military mission, the fact that Barbie later decided to deport the tortured persons whom he had at his disposal knowing they would be interned in concentration camps — where they would be subject to more or less rapid extermination — showed the accused as the executor of the Third Reich's policy of ideological hegemony.

The same reasons prompted the Paris court to rule as crimes against humanity the deportation of Resistance activists on August 11, 1944. The same applied in the case of Régine Skorza who was deported to Auschwitz on July 11, 1944.

On the other hand, neither the killing of police superintendent Jules Cros nor the round-up at the SNCF's Oullins workshops could be considered as crimes against humanity, as the court held that no proof was produced to show that the accused in this case acted in pursuance of the Third Reich's hegemonistic policy.

As the associations of Resistance activists and the League of Human Rights have no intention of appealing against this decision, and Klaus Barbie's lawyer, Jacques Vergès is of the same mind, the case is now ready for examination by the Rhône district court. It will be up to this court to fix a date for the trial and organise it.

It is not expected, however, that the trial will begin before 1987. It has to be remembered that the appeal court is due to rule on two appeals made by families of Klaus Barbie whose petition to be privately associated in the action of the public prosecutor was declared inadmissible by the Lyons court.

(July 11)

Anniversary of Popular Front evokes bitter memories

THE 50th anniversary of the Popular Front has not been celebrated with great enthusiasm in France (except by a handful of city councils and companies). Publishers have shown little interest: the event has been marked by only half a dozen new titles or new editions, as though for the 100th anniversary of some forgotten poet.

This reluctance to celebrate the French left's last-but-one taste of power cannot be put down entirely to the current political situation. There would seem to be another, more convincing reason — the same reason that prevented the event from inspiring any great epic novels: the Popular Front had no heroes or heroic climax, it just crumbled away, and ended not with a bang but a whimper.

No one would dispute that the theatre and cinema, because they are created and enjoyed collectively, reflect the sensibility of a period with greater immediacy than the written word, even when they turn their back on contemporary reality or try to take their audiences' minds off it.

The French cinema was particularly talented and inventive during the Popular Front period taken in its broadest sense — say from about 1935 to 1939. Even movies that had no connection with topical political or social events have an unmistakable mutual resemblance that reflects the attitudes of the times — and this makes them first-class historical sources.

The publishers Editions Lherminier were quite right to get a historian, Genevieve Guillaume-Grimaud, to write the volume on the Popular Front in their series "Le cinema et son histoire". In fact, she could have called her book "History and its cinema", so fascinated is she by the contribution that films can make to her own discipline.

The greatest creative force in the cinema during the Popular Front was, of course, Jean Renoir. Two of his films, "La Vie Est à Nous" and "La Marseillaise", grew directly out of the 1936 situation; but he directed two others which are symptomatic of people's concerns at the time and possibly even of their collective unconscious.

"Le Crime de Monsieur Lange", shot before the 1936 elections, foreshadows the dreams of self-management that suddenly materialised during the June strikes and factory occupations.

And "La Bête Humaine", which was released at the end of 1938 after the failure of the general strike on November 30, reminds us that certain physiological taints, as Emile Zola's original novel had shown, cannot be remedied by any social reform, however comprehensive.

Geneviève Guillaume-Grimaud resists the temptation to linger only on politically committed films, such as those I have just mentioned, and Julien Duvivier's "La Belle Equipe". She reminds us that the greatest successes of the time were "Le Roi", a vaudeville film based on a play by Robert de Flers, Gaston de Cavillavet and Emmanuel Arène, and Léon Poirier's "L'Appel du Silence", on the life of the celebrated missionary, Charles de Foucauld.

She is also aware that, unlike books, movies depend heavily on technical and financial circumstances. The talkies had not been

By Bertrand Poirot-Delpech

going all that long. Colour was on the way. The economic crisis of 1929 was recent history, and the storm clouds of war were gathering.

Her analysis of the films themselves is preceded by some very interesting views on the causes of the political upheavals of the time, the cinema's financial situation in the 1930s here and abroad, and conditions under which films were produced, directed and distributed, the pressures on film-makers, censorship, and the press.

Press extracts show that critics were already debating political commitment and the need for ambiguity in works of art. Few books have so thoroughly exploited the seam of specialised film magazines, which reflect, at one remove, the dreams of the periods and its escapism into coarse comedy, cheap exoticism, outlandish psychology, and *Schadenfreude*.

At the end of that period, hopes of saving peace coincided with the pro-Munich spirit of the French nation and turned out to be a *grande illusion*.

Press cuttings are particularly useful to historians of the Popular Front, a period when ideology was king, polemic raged, and vicious slander often replaced real events — and sometimes drove people to criminal acts or suicide.

In 1961, the publishers Armand Colin brought out a history of the Popular Front by Louis Bodin and Jean Touchard in their "Kiosque" series. The book has been revised and republished in their new series "L'Histoire par la Presse".

I don't know if it is the result of May 1968 or May 1981, but France now seems to be more comprehensively divided down the middle, on the topic of 1936, than it was when the book was first published 25 years ago. For some, the Popular Front was a huge social advance tantamount to a legal revolution, a milestone of human emancipation, a cultural explosion; others argue that it was a period of terror and waste that was punished by France's defeat in 1940.

The same arguments have been running around in people's heads for half a century — except for racism, whose criminal consequences were revealed in all their horror by the Holocaust and whose open espousal is no longer respectable (though deep down it may be a different matter, to judge from some of the letters I get challenging what I have written about the period!).

The rightwing press of the time is enormously illuminating. It frequently appeals to its readers to commit criminal acts, and proudly flaunts its anti-Semitism. We find Charles Maurras's notorious remark about "the Jew Blum": he is "a man who should be shot, but shot in the back".

Anyone urging war with Hitler should, we are told, be stabbed to death — with "a kitchen knife" if necessary. Even today, some people persist in excusing the inexcusable in the name of talent, while their third-rate disciples try to prove they are talented by behaving abjectly.

The press was so violently and obsessively politicised that between the two opposing camps, each of them armed to the teeth, there was no room for moderate newspapers to put across a reasonably objective point of view.

It was only in the foreign press, especially in Britain and the United States, that balanced analysis and opinion could be found. Even today, public opinion in France, which has always tended to be extremist and to fantasise about civil war, is vulnerable to that sort of inflammatory journalism.

Writers took sides during the Popular Front more decisively than they ever had since the Dreyfus affair, but very few wrote novels based on their experience. The magazine Europe has just brought out a special issue entitled "1936, Arts et Littérature", which demonstrates the relative dearth of fictional works compared with what was going on in the theatre, cinema and visual arts, all of which were flourishing.

This point is brought home even more tellingly by Geraldi Leroy and Anne Roche's "Les Ecrivains et le Front Populaire", the first piece of literary history devoted to works written during or about the 1936 events. It contrasts the vigour with which writers took stands on current issues with the discretion of the novels and poems they drew from their experiences.

As far as the right is concerned, vigour is a term that falls somewhat short of the mark. Newspapers like L'Action Française, Candide, Gringoire and Je Suis Partout were revolted by the leftwing coalition's rise to power. It was subjected to a torrent of derisive and often racist abuse. Universal suffrage was abominated along with aliens and Jews. Personal smears replaced political argument.

Those whom the Popular Front caused to froth at the mouth included, to varying degrees (which are carefully assessed by the authors), Maurras, Robert Brasillach, Pierre Drieu la Rochelle and Lucien Rebatet.

Rebatet surpassed himself in a piece of execration that served as the central theme of his "Décombres" (which was widely disseminated, and appreciated, under the Occupation): like some sniffy old dowager, he lambasts the women workers taking part in protest marches not wearing hats — "bare-headed bitches", he croaks.

Leftwing weeklies carried less impact and had smaller circulations. The two most important were Marianne and Vendredi. Originally started up by Gaston Gallimard in 1932 for purely commercial reasons, Marianne was turned by Emmanuel Berl into a publication that lent Léon Blum critical support.

Vendredi, which grew out of the anti-fascist reaction to the riots of February, 1934, contained articles by writers of varying ideological complexions — the Protestant André Chamson, who was close to the Radicals, the Socialist Jean Guéhenno, a working-class lad who made it to the Ecole Normale, the journalist Andree Viollis, who became a Communist after the war, and the Catholic Louis Martin-Chauffier. Other occasional contributors included Alain, Louis Aragon, Julien Benda, André Gide, Jean Giono, and André Malraux.

Despite its modest circulation of 60,000 (compared with Candide's 460,000 and Gringoire's 650,000), Vendredi played a decisive role in securing Blum his small majority — at least that was what Blum believed.

The Popular Front was treated sympathically by various other magazines, such as Europe and Esprit, and supported by prominent intellectuals like Georges Bataille and Simone Weil, both of them predecessors, in their different ways, of the spirit of May 1968, and by the surrealist guru, André Breton.

But the writers' political commitment expressed itself solely in their actions, and not in their works. Even those interested in the world around them and concerned with history gave no importance to the Popular Front in their novels. This is true of Maurice Blanchot, Raymond Queneau, Michel Leiris, Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir.

In explaining the phenomenon, Geraldi Leroy and Anne Roche make the illuminating point, often missed by others, that the Popular Front tended to fade in intensity the further one was removed — geographically, socially and politically — from the Red, industrial milieux of Paris where the event was most keenly experienced.

"Le Cinéma du Front Populaire", by Geneviève Guillaume-Grimaud, published by Lherminier, 210pp, 165 francs.

Continued on page 14

COMMENT

New Zealand needs a touch of cynicism

IN THE EYES of New Zealand, Australia or any other South Pacific country the case is simple: two French officers duly convicted of complicity in a special services operation are getting away scotfree. They are being sent to do penance of sorts on an atoll where France maintains a base for its beastly nuclear tests.

A few wags will be delighted they are being exposed to the "contamination" that is rather too readily denounced in the region. Only two months ago, 76 per cent of New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange's constituents were insisting that the phony Turenges serve out their 10 years in gaol. With or without the apologies and the deals made for their butter and lamb, they will hardly now be delighted with the settlement which has just taken place.

The "appropriate outcome, albeit unexpected" that Lange spoke about with unconscious humour was described as a "sick joke" and a "national humiliation" by Opposition leader Jim Bolger. In his fury he even went so far as to accuse UN Secretary-General Javier Peréz de Cuellar of rewarding the French agents with "a holiday in the South Pacific with their families and friends." The New Zealand Herald is not particularly upset by the fact that these rather special holidaymakers had acted on orders and suffered several months of imprisonment; it rails against what it describes as a "sordid deal". Now, it says, "any fairly powerful and unscrupulous nation can send agents to our country and kill people."

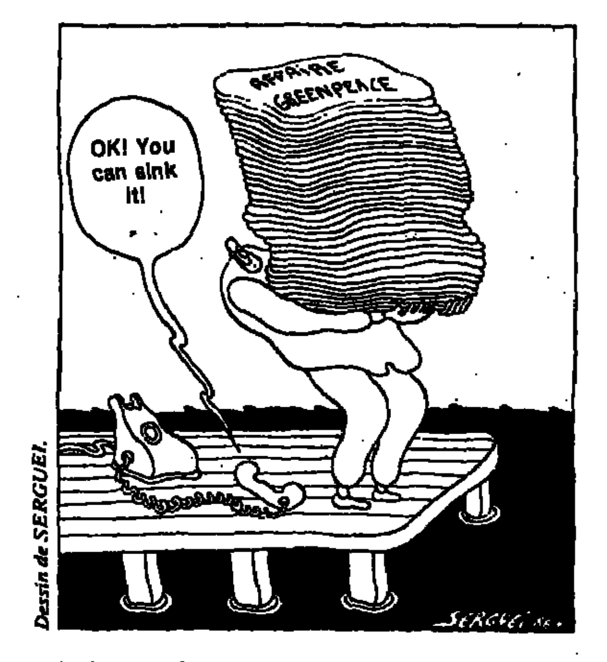
It is the simple-hearted indignation of Protestant sheep farmers at the hard reality of reasons of State. Must we be surprised that these nations at the other end of the world lack the touch of cynicism tempering the steel of a De Gaulle or a Richelieu? Yet, the France of Laurent Fabius did apologise and present its excuses, which is not a very frequent occurrence under our national tradition.

When all's said and done, in this sorry business France was rather fortunate it did not have to deal with a clever adversary who might have caused it problems. With his impetuosity, garrulousness and habit of making untimely and categorical statements, Prime Minister Lange promised what he could not deliver. A cannier practitioner would have let Paris become entangled in the consequences of its own admission. Above all, had he read La Fontaine's fable about the iron pot and the earthenware pot, he would have taken account of the balance of power.

It took Lange a recent tour of West European countries to realise that France's partners in the EEC could not reasonably espouse the minor quarrel — however justified it may be — of a small State indignant at being treated to "lamb diplomacy". And especially as New Zealand, anxious to pursue its anti-nuclear crusade, was already at odds with the United States by its de facto renunciation of the regional defence pact linking it to Canberra and Washington.

Damages and apologies . . . At the end of the day, what Lange has obtained is not negligible after all. The people who vote for him are likely to be more sensitive to his u-turn even if, as hard-headed exporters, they are greatly relieved at getting back their endangered markets. But in this business, while it has obtained the satisfaction commensurate with its "big power" status, it is rather France that cuts a mean figure.

(July 8)



Dessin de SERGUEI.

France's 'friendly pressure' leaves the farmers happy

By Bernard Brigouleix

THE NEGOTIATIONS for the release of Major Alain Mafart and Captain Dominique Prieur, which were successfully conducted under the authority of UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, began ten months ago on the fringes of the UN General Assembly in New York where the process was really set in motion.

On September 23, France's then Foreign Minister Roland Dumas at his request had a meeting with New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister Geoffrey Palmer. Contacts with Wellington's No. 2 man seemed easier, despite the fact that just the week before his planned visit to Paris had been called off, than with Prime Minister David Lange, given to unpredictable changes of mood. They agreed that representatives of the two governments would meet shortly to examine the options open to them.

The French negotiator — to spare NZ susceptibilities, the word "negotiations" was avoided and one spoke of "exploratory conversations" — was Gilbert Guillaume, head of the Quai d'Orsay's legal department. He is not a diplomat and showed skill and good sense throughout the case appreciated by the "professionals" in his department.

The talks soon seemed to have reached stalemate. Whatever the financial packages proposed and apologies offered by Paris, they invariably came up against Lange's determination not to release the French agents until they had served "at least half their terms", as the NZ Prime Minister explained in one of his more expansive moods.

The French tried to apply a little "friendly pressure" on Lange using the services of contacts known to both parties in the Socialist International. All to no avail; Lange remained intractable.

Without abandoning hope of persuading him, Paris began setting up a series of economic measures which were calculated to get him to do a deal under pressure from his own farmers. It was a tricky operation, this kind of pressure had to remain discreet, for every time there was any reference to it, Lange got on his high horse and made much oratorical capital on the subject: "Our honour is not for sale."

The change of government in France did not on the face of it introduce anything new into the case. But it provided the new government with a chance to restart the process . . . The basic plan was twofold. Paris felt that more pressure had to be put on New Zealand where its exports were concerned on a European rather than a purely French scale, while at the same time offering Lange an honourable way out so he could meet France's request without seeming to go back on his words or capitulate.

I think that our release is going to be a bombshell!

Dessin de PLANTU.

On the first point, Paris stepped up contacts with its EEC partners, pointing out in passing that the agreement covering NZ butter sales to the EEC was coming up for renegotiation on August 1. Lange got the message. In the course of his recent calls on European countries, nearly all the people Lange met urged him to settle.

As for the "honourable way out", the search was on for a potential mediator enjoying recognised international prestige. Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers, then chairman of the European Council, favoured this initiative. Pierre Elliott Trudeau's name was suggested. Perez de Cuellar's name finally met approval. As late as in early June, Lange was saying he ruled out any negotiations on the fate of the "Turenges" so long as Paris maintained "economic sanctions". But 10 days later, on June 19, a communique was published simultaneously by Wellington and Paris giving assurances that the two countries would accept the settlement worked out by Perez de Cuellar.

In fact, all the Secretary-General had to do was draw up a synthesis of the two memoranda he had been given by Paris and Wellington. Gilbert Guillaume had moreover done a good deal of the spadework in two secret meetings with Christopher Beeby, deputy secretary of the New Zealand Foreign Ministry. At this stage, each side had very good reasons for concluding the affair quickly. Following the release of two of the French hostages held in Lebanon, the French government was eager to stick another diplomatic feather in its cap. The New Zealand government could not remain unmoved by its exporters' worries. If it had to give in, it might as well do so with the elections still a long way off. Finally, Perez de Cuellar himself, whether or not he is planning to run for a second term as UN Secretary-General at the end of the year, wanted to seize the opportunity to refurbish the organisation's image and set a precedent. That mission was accomplished on Sunday, July 6, and the success made public the following day.

(July 9)

The real victims of the Greenpeace affair

By Bertrand Le Gendre

THE REAL VICTIM of this case was Fernando Pereira, the Portuguese photographer who was trapped and drowned when he went to recover his camera in the bomb-shattered wreck of the Rainbow Warrior. If the "Turenges" also later appeared to be victims, they owe it to the stupidity of the orders they were given, bad luck, their own clumsiness and the spitefulness shown by shadowy opponents towards those who believe in the explanation that the sabotage was "sabotaged".

Major Mafart and Captain Prieur deserved better than this sorry saga played out against a background of chauvinistic tears and millions of dollars in damage compensation. He is a brilliant career officer, a former paratrooper, one-time boss of the Aspretto combat diving school in Corsica. She is the first woman officer of the DGSE's action service . . .

From their prisons in Christchurch and Paremoreno respectively they kept in close touch — thanks to newspapers and phone calls from people close to them — with the wheeling and dealing going on around them. In purely accounting terms — the political damage is incalculable — the cost is steep: F50 million compared with the F2.3 paid by the French government to Fernando Pereira's family, his parents, his divorced wife and their two children.

The bill will look even more incredible when we know — probably in the autumn — the findings of the mediators jointly named by the French government and the Greenpeace movement. The environmentalists are said to be asking for "several million dollars", according to a French negotiator. More important than deciding whether they are entitled to it is that we should know whether the real culprits in this incredible run of miscalculations and obfuscations will be named one day.

Decorated with the Légion d'Honneur and rehabilitated by universal suffrage on March 16, former Defence Minister Charles Hernu is now free of the "Turenges" headache. The code of silence which binds him to François Mitterrand and the political class will doubtless never be broken. For reasons of state of course. Which turns the former Defence Minister into a victim, like Fernando Pereira, like the "Turenges". A curious conclusion.

(July 9)

LETTERS

Fundamental dangers of Islam

Alexandre Buccianti's article (Le Monde section, May 25) on the growing violence of Islamic fundamentalists in Egypt illustrates the danger which many Muslim countries face as they try to emerge from the backwaters of antiquated traditions.

Assuming that Islamic fundamentalists act strictly according to the words of the Quran then surprisingly one does not find any explicit message in that book asking the faithful to force the women out of university classrooms and allow them admission only to segregated lectures.

It seems the fundamentalist image that had there been coeducational institutions of learning in existence in prophet's time, he would surely have prayed to Allah to impose segregation on women. Such thinking may have been fostered by the Quran's attitude towards women. Quran is the only religious book which explicitly grants to man the right to beat his wife (wives) if she (they) disobey him.

The noted fundamentalist author Abul Aala Mawdudi, mentioned in Buccianti's article, has defended the principle of wife-beating by simply asserting that violence is an indispensable remedy for some types of women to make them obedient.

In their attempts to ban the teaching of evolution and cosmological theories which they find in conflict with their beliefs, the Islamic fundamentalists may not be acting too differently from the American "Creationists". However, the similarity between the two ends there. In most of the countries where Islamic fundamentalists operate, there are no powerful and prestigious scientific bodies and institutions who can defend the position of science in society vis-a-vis religion. It would be naive to assume that the benefits of western science are not obvious to fundamentalist Muslims. They envy the power of the West achieved by means of science, but they detest the growth of scientific thought in their own countries, since it may bring about a change in the intellectual climate by promoting rational thinking and philosophical speculation independent of religion. This will lead inevitably to the decline of Islamic philosophy.

Syed M. Saleem,
Cumbres de Curumo,
Caracas, Venezuela.

André François is an artist with many strings to his bow — oil painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, set designing, book illustration, cartoons and advertising (especially posters). But behind the diversification there is a homogeneous and immediately recognisable style. This emerges very strongly from the retrospective now on at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and from the book devoted to his work just published by Herscher (an English translation is due out in the autumn).

François first made a name for himself outside France. He contributed cartoons to Punch and Lilliput in a similar vein to the work of his friend, Ronald Searle, and designed many covers for the New Yorker.

The nonconformist verve and concise humour that was the hallmark of his magazine work also informed his posters, which he began designing mainly for advertising agencies, then in the 1960s increasingly for cultural or humanitarian causes.

In the late 1950s, when commissioned by another longstanding friend, Robert Delpire, to design posters for the launch of Citroën's new DS model with hydraulic suspension, François did not depict a car at all, but instead conjured up an eloquent bestiary of hybrid creatures — half-angel/half-fish, half-duck/half-fish, and so on — around the theme of water. This was at a time when everyone saw cars purely in terms of roaring, naturalistically-depicted machines.

His celebrated poster for the weekly Nouvel Observateur in 1972 broke away from traditional hard-sell advertising techniques: it showed a flock of sheep with polo-necks made of newspaper.

Soon François's commercial art became as well known in France as it had been abroad. But in the 1960s he concentrated more on his private work, which is well-represented in the Palais de Tokyo exhibition and in Herscher's book. Here, sometimes tender, sometimes wistful images are thrown together in startling and often absurd juxtposition — André François's wit is never far away.

But in his most recent work he has drawn his inspiration more from daily life, with portraits of friends and family as well as self-portraits, and images of his studio, his garden, and of children playing in the long grass.

When I went to see André François at his country home, he was in his studio at the bottom of his garden, waiting for a truck to pick up some of his work for the Palais de Tokyo exhibition. He was shifting heavy canvases and objects with apparent ease, for although 70, he still cuts an athletic figure.

Pausing between bouts of exertion, he reminisced: "We were in Haute-Savoie from 1942 to 1944. We did a lot of walking. One day, a farmer's wife asked me: 'What do you do in life when there's no war?' 'I'm a painter and a draughtsman.' 'Oh, what a pity,' she said, 'a fine strapping fellow like you!' ".

Grasping the basics



Self portrait in the studio, detail

QUESTION: You began your career in Montparnasse in the mid-1930s? Why had you left your native Hungary?

François: I left, I suppose, because I had too many uncles and aunts. There were 15 in all. I was fascinated by Paris, and greatly admired the work of Cassandre (it was the nom de plume of Kharkov-born French artist Jean-Marie Mouron, 1901-1968, who designed advertising posters and theatre sets), whose posters I had seen.

When I was 17, I spent a year at the Budapest College of Art. I had a terrible teacher. One day, I put a bottle of milk in my drawing next to the model who was posing for us — and who was very skinny. The teacher was furious: "We don't want any of your Socialist propaganda!" He was really fuming.

Was that your first piece of social and political satire?

It was sentimentalism more than anything. The politics were pure chance. It's like the last big slap my father gave me. To get out of going to church. I told him I was an atheist. In fact, I just wanted to go to a football match that morning.

Did you go to the Paris Beaux Arts?

No, I worked with Cassandre, who opened his own school I learned to put a lot of effort in. Quite often we'd take a poster out into the street after a whole night's work to check that the colours were okay in daylight. Sometimes Cassandre would make us start from scratch again.

Posters were important then. People looked forward to them, they'd cross the street to look at the ones that had just been put up. It was the cultural event of the week, a bit like the week's new films nowadays,

It's common to hear people say nowadays that advertising is an art.

If it were art, it wouldn't really matter. It would even be quite flattering. But what's a pity is that advertising is regarded as a science. It's an attitude that has clipped its wings. Everything is subordinated to market research.

In fact advertising has less and less to do with art. It's just an artifice. As a result it has ended up become ineffective. Television commercials are very cleverly made, smart little films. One sees cars bucking like broncos or flying through the air.

It reminds me of the poster designed by my friend Raymond Savignac for Dunlop tyres. It showed an ordinary-looking little man floating in mid-air surrounded by four wheels. A much more striking image, don't you think?

Yet graphic artists are still very much in the game. Savignac, at 79, recently designed a Citroën poster. Villemot — who I think tends to repeat himself a bit these days — did one for the soft drink Orangina. And you designed a poster for the Nouvel Observateur, and one for Africa last year.

They're exceptions. It's very different nowadays: the advertising agency thinks up the idea and asks you to give it a really professional touch. There's nothing I hate more than that, turning everything into a virtuoso exercise

The two most horrible months of my life I spent in Hollywood. I signed my contract — to make a series of animated films for the Jack-in-the-Box fast-food chain — and turned up at my hotel, ready to perform, so to speak. I spent three weeks of my two-month stay simply demolishing the storyboard that had been imposed on me.

What I would like to see is a return to inspiration.

Your artistic career has oscillated between your own work as an artist — your paintings, collages and objects — and your output as a graphic designer

I began doing drawings to earn a living. Then I got to like them. I tried to make them as good as possible, and they were too successful! I first started drawing cartoons, funnily enough, during what the French call the "drôle de guerre" or "phoney war". I was waiting to do my military service. But then came the armistice, so I was never called up. The war prevented me from doing my military service.

In France, your sense of humour is regarded as British.

And in England people liked my work because of its French "wit". It's true that French humour is often more verbal than visual. The French are a "witty" race. I always try to see the tragic side of life. There can be no real humour without a touch of the tragic.

Tragic maybe, but not, in your work at least, malicious. You are ferocious yet tender. Are you never nasty?

Life's quite nasty enough as it is, don't you think? It would be ill-bred to be malicious — do you remember Emperor Franz Josef's remark about anti-Semitism? He described it as a lack of breeding.

So what happened after the war?

My first real poster dates from 1944. It was to advertise a gala for prisoners of war and deportees. But I earned my living mainly from newspapers. At the end of the war, there was a shortage of everything except newspapers. Several new titles would appear each week. They all had their day for receiving copy. I took drawings along, and sometimes they published them.

Interview by Michéle Champenois

Advertising was biding its time. So were books. The first book I illustrated was an edition of Diderot's "Jacques le Fataliste", at Aragon's request

Then there was Jacques Prévert . . .

My work has often been compared with Raymond Queneau's. I like his poetry very much, but his verbal 'mathematics' less so. I feel I have more in common with Prevert. For several months, we saw each other every week. We were working on a book. We just talked. But the text was never ready. Prevert told me to draw and I drew. Then he wrote.

It became a kind of political pamphlet, "Lettres des Iles Baladar", happy islands where gold is found, and which then turn into *presqu'îles* (peninsulas). That was in 1952, the German occupation was not long over, there was the Marshall Plan and all that.

Your first advertising work as such was for Galeries Lafayette.

I remember it well: it was for the sales, one week for household linen, the other for lace. At that time, just before the war, there were sales just of lace!

Much later, you did work for big causes, cultural campaigns and so on.

Yes, there was a time when I got more support from UNESCO than ad agencies.

But it was also your own decision, wasn't it?

Yes, I can even date it precisely. In 1962 I was preparing an exhibition for New York and I realised I would have to give priority to one particular activity. I plumped for painting, though I continued to agree to do the occasional poster, because it was something I enjoyed doing.

Your success as an illustrator and poster-designer at the expense — in France at least — of your work as a painter and sculptor, seems to have given you a complex. Is the idea behind this exhibition to get rid of that complex?

Yes, it annoys me. If a painter has a sense of humour, people say: he's a humorist who paints. But so-called pure art is sometimes much more commercial than so-called commercial art. The applied arts have very strict rules which have to be adhered to.

The two forms require completely different working methods: when you design a poster or draw an illustration, you are given a very complex brief which you try to reduce to essentials.

Painting is the opposite. It is a feeling or a simple shape one enriches or develops. At a certain point, the painting is finished. It's then that you try to understand what it means.

There are recurring themes in your collages — butterflies, clock-faces, bits of chairs, cut-out metal sheets. You're always looking for similarities, coincidences.

It's the object which gives the orders. A pebble placed on a blank sheet of paper can inspire a drawing. It's like throwing a stone into the water and observing the ripples.

Do you like the surrealists? Did you move in their circles?

No, not really. I'm less interested in surrealism than in showing inner reality.

The André François retrospective is on at the Palais de Tokyo, 13 avenue du President-Wilson, 75016 Paris, until September 8. André François (graphic art, paintings, drawings and theatre sets), published by Herscher, 232 pp, F430.

Aquatint, 1971

Popular Front

Continued from page 12

"Front Populaire 1936", by Louis Bodin and Jean Touchard, published by Armand Colin, 238pp, 120 francs.

"1936, Arts et Littérature", special issue of the magazine Europe, 210pp, 65 francs.

"Les Ecrivains et le Front Populaire", by Geraldi Leroy and Anne Roche, published by Presses de la Fondation des Sciences Politiques, 324pp, 160 francs.

The Washington Post

The 'Disappeared' Of South Africa

By Glenn Frankel

JOHANNESBURG — The man's hands were gripped tightly together and his head lowered as he described his wife's arrest three weeks ago and his two brief meetings with her in jail.

For a while, he said, she had been held with other political detainees at the central prison, where she had access to books, daily exercise and the company of others being held under South Africa's stringent state of emergency. Then, last week, she had been transferred to a security police headquarters for interrogation and held in solitary confinement. The lights burned 24 hours a day in her cell, meals were bleak and irregular, the toilet filthy, he said, while exercise was not allowed and the only reading matter was the Bible.

"This is going to break her absolutely," the man said, recalling her frightened look during his last visit. "She feels very scared."

Her situation, as described by her husband, who asked that their names not be used, was just one nameless case among thousands involving detainees since the government imposed a state of emergency one month ago and began rounding up opponents. Since then, human-rights advocates estimate, between 3,800 and 8,000 people have been detained without charge or access to lawyers. They can be held indefinitely until the end of the emergency, which officials hint could go on for months.

In one sense, the man whose wife is at security-police headquarters is lucky. He at least knows where his wife is. Despite official assurances to the contrary, rights advocates say that in a large majority of cases, family members have not been informed of the detentions.

The government contends the detentions are necessary to bring to an end two years of bloodshed that has claimed more than 2,000 lives and plunged this white-ruled country into a seemingly permanent political crisis. Citing "state security," Pretoria has refused to release the names or numbers of those detained and has threatened journalists with prosecution or deportation if they publish detainees' names, any "unauthorized" information about police activities or anything else deemed "subversive." This article was written under those restrictions.

Nonetheless, as the emergency enters its second month, some information is beginning to trickle from the prisons. Civil rights lawyers, using the limited powers of South Africa's judiciary, have begun to hammer some small chinks in the monolithic state security apparatus. Three detainees were released last week after lawsuits were brought on their behalf by relatives. In two cases, judges ruled that even using their sweeping emergency powers, police must have reasonable grounds to make arrests.

Courts in Natal have granted orders restraining police from assaulting three teen-aged detainees. In each case, relatives visiting the prisoners said they complained of being beaten by police. The government has yet to file responses to these allegations.

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"We're mostly getting messages shouted from the prison windows or things said to relatives on visits," he said. "Just about all we can do is request assurances from Pretoria that a district surgeon (prison doctor) will be immediately dispatched to visit the cell and examine the detainee."

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By David Martin and Phyllis Johnson

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The dictionary definition of sanctions is "economic or military action to coerce a state to conform." There is ample evidence that South Africa is using both economic and military means to coerce its neighbors, restricting their access to trade routes and vastly increasing their transportation costs.

To achieve this, Pretoria relies largely on surrogate forces. Captured documents, prisoners and ballistics tests have identified South Africa as the source of training, weapons, and strategy for armed bands in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Angola, which, together with Zambia, Lesotho and Botswana, have also been subjected to direct attacks by the South African defense force.

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Of the regional rail links running east, west and south, the only one not sabotaged since 1980 is that running south through Zimbabwe to the South African ports of Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and Cape Town.

The region's other main outlets to the sea are west through Angola and east through Mozambique. The western link to the Atlantic coast is the Benguela Railway, which used to transport copper from Zambia (accounting for 90 percent of its exports) and from Zaire's Shaba Province. This route has not functioned for more than a decade due to sabotage in Angola. The eastern rail links through Mozambique have also been systematically sabotaged or destroyed, preventing the landlocked countries in central Africa from using trade routes to Indian Ocean ports.

Routes through Mozambique are the shortest and cheapest means of transportation for goods from Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi and offered the option for Botswana to divert its trade. Three years after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, more than half of that country's trade transitted Mozambique, reducing Zimbabwe's dependence on the South African railway network.

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Having ensured dependence on southern routes, South African authorities can divert or delay this traffic at will. Their insistence that Zimbabwe use ports other than Durban added $500 per ton to the freight cost of tobacco exports. There are hundreds of other examples of selective sanctions dating back to 1981.

Angola's case is sometimes seen as different, for it has been fighting a war since South African troops invaded in August 1975. South Africa has a direct national interest at stake in Angola in that the capture and control of the Cabinda oilfields would give Pretoria fuel security in the event of effective imposition of an international oil embargo.

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Sanctions Against Pinochet?

THE chance death of a 19-year-old with Washington connections has given Americans a rare glimpse of the condition of state terrorism prevailing in Chile. Rodrigo Rojas graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in the District of Columbia and recently returned to visit his native country, which his mother had fled as a political refugee. He was in a group of students entering one of the slums that army units regularly invade and terrorize. Soldiers grabbed him and a companion, beat them, doused them with an inflammable fluid, set them afire and dumped them by a road. When they were finally brought to a hospital, they were denied suitable treatment. Rojas died last week.

Gen. Augusto Pinochet in 1973 overthrew an elected government that had seen the country slide into civil war. He set up shop as a dictator and, in 1980, wrote a constitution that could yet keep him in power for the extraordinary span of 25 years. At first many Chileans at least tolerated his rule as a relief from chaos. Their toleration has since thinned, but their efforts to find a path back to Chile's traditional stable democratic ways have foundered. Democrats from across the spectrum agreed on a broad blueprint called the National Accord a year ago, but have yet to follow through.

President Pinochet has played on the opposition's divisions and on a general apprehension about violence on the left — violence that he partly provokes by closing off normal political outlets. Nor has he shrunk from using the security forces for political viciousness.

Successive American administrations have sought a way to help

Continued on page 16

André François is an artist with many strings to his bow — oil painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, set designing, book illustration, cartoons and advertising (especially posters). But behind the diversification there is a homogeneous and immediately recognisable style. This emerges very strongly from the retrospective now on at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris and from the book devoted to his work just published by Herscher (an English translation is due out in the autumn).

François first made a name for himself outside France. He contributed cartoons to Punch and Lilliput in a similar vein to the work of his friend, Ronald Searle, and designed many covers for the New Yorker.

The nonconformist verve and concise humour that was the hallmark of his magazine work also informed his posters, which he began designing mainly for advertising agencies, then in the 1960s increasingly for cultural or humanitarian causes.

In the late 1950s, when commissioned by another longstanding friend, Robert Delpire, to design posters for the launch of Citroën's new DS model with hydraulic suspension, François did not depict a car at all, but instead conjured up an eloquent bestiary of hybrid creatures — half-angel/half-fish, half-duck/half-fish, and so on — around the theme of water. This was at a time when everyone saw cars purely in terms of roaring, naturalistically-depicted machines.

His celebrated poster for the weekly Nouvel Observateur in 1972 broke away from traditional hard-sell advertising techniques: it showed a flock of sheep with polo-necks made of newspaper.

Soon François's commercial art became as well known in France as it had been abroad. But in the 1960s he concentrated more on his private work, which is well-represented in the Palais de Tokyo exhibition and in Herscher's book. Here, sometimes tender, sometimes wistful images are thrown together in startling and often absurd juxtposition — André François's wit is never far away.

But in his most recent work he has drawn his inspiration more from daily life, with portraits of friends and family as well as self-portraits, and images of his studio, his garden, and of children playing in the long grass.

When I went to see André François at his country home, he was in his studio at the bottom of his garden waiting for a truck to pick up some of his work for the Palais de Tokyo exhibition. He was shifting heavy canvases and objects with apparent ease, for although 70, he still cuts an athletic figure.

Pausing between bouts of exertion, he reminisced: "We were in Haute-Savoie from 1942 to 1944. We did a lot of walking. One day, a farmer's wife asked me: 'What do you do in life when there's no war?' 'I'm a painter and a draughtsman.' 'Oh, what a pity,' she said, 'a fine strapping fellow like you!' ".

Grasping the basics



Self portrait in the studio, detail

QUESTION: You began your career in Montparnasse in the mid-1930s? Why had you left your native Hungary?

François: I left, I suppose, because I had too many uncles and aunts. There were 15 in all. I was fascinated by Paris, and greatly admired the work of Cassandre (it was the nom de plume of Kharkov-born French artist Jean-Marie Mouron, 1901-1968, who designed advertising posters and theatre sets), whose posters I had seen.

When I was 17, I spent a year at the Budapest College of Art. I had a terrible teacher. One day, I put a bottle of milk in my drawing next to the model who was posing for us — and who was very skinny. The teacher was furious: "We don't want any of your Socialist propaganda!" He was really fuming.

Was that your first piece of social and political satire?

It was sentimentalism more than anything. The politics were pure chance. It's like the last big slap my father gave me. To get out of going to church, I told him I was an atheist. In fact, I just wanted to go to a football match that morning.

Did you go to the Paris Beaux Arts?

No, I worked with Cassandre, who opened his own school. I learned to put a lot of effort in. Quite often we'd take a poster out into the street after a whole night's work to check that the colours were okay in daylight. Sometimes Cassandre would make us start from scratch again.

Posters were important then. People looked forward to them, they'd cross the street to look at the ones that had just been put up. It was the cultural event of the week, a bit like the week's new films nowadays.

It's common to hear people say nowadays that advertising is an art.

If it were art, it wouldn't really matter. It would even be quite flattering. But what's a pity is that advertising is regarded as a science. It's an attitude that has clipped its wings. Everything is subordinated to market research

In fact advertising has less and less to do with art. It's just an artifice. As a result it has ended up become ineffective. Television commercials are very cleverly made, smart little films. One sees cars bucking like broncos or flying through the air.

It reminds me of the poster designed by my friend Raymond Savignac for Dunlop tyres. It showed an ordinary-looking little man floating in mid-air surrounded by four wheels. A much more striking image, don't you think?

Yet graphic artists are still very much in the game. Savignac, at 79, recently designed a Citroen poster. Villemot — who I think tends to repeat himself a bit these days — did one for the soft drink Orangina. And you designed a poster for the Nouvel Observateur, and one for Africa last year.

They're exceptions It's very different nowadays: the advertising agency thinks up the idea and asks you to give it a really professional touch. There's nothing I hate more than that, turning everything into a virtuoso exercise.

The two most horrible months of my life I spent in Hollywood. I signed my contract — to make a series of animated films for the Jack-in-the-Box fast-food chain — and turned up at my hotel, ready to perform, so to speak. I spent three weeks of my two-month stay simply demolishing the storyboard that had been imposed on me.

What I would like to see is a return to inspiration.

Your artistic career has oscillated between your own work as an artist — your paintings, collages and objects — and your output as a graphic designer.

I began doing drawings to earn a living. Then I got to like them. I tried to make them as good as possible, and they were too successful! I first started drawing cartoons, funnily enough, during what the French call the "drôle de guerre" or "phoney war". I was waiting to do my military service. But then came the armistice, so I was never called up. The war prevented me from doing my military service.

In France, your sense of humour is regarded as British.

And in England people liked my work because of its French "wit". It's true that French humour is often more verbal than visual. The French are a "witty" race. I always try to see the tragic side of life. There can be no real humour without a touch of the tragic.

Tragic maybe, but not, in your work at least, malicious. You are ferocious yet tender Are you never nasty?

Life's quite nasty enough as it is, don't you think? It would be ill-bred to be malicious — do you remember Emperor Franz Josef's remark about anti-Semitism? He described it as a lack of breeding.

So what happened after the war?

My first real poster dates from 1944. It was to advertise a gala for prisoners of war and deportees. But I earned my living mainly from newspapers. At the end of the war, there was a shortage of everything except newspapers. Several new titles would appear each week. They all had their day for receiving copy. I took drawings along,

Interview by Michéle Champenois

and sometimes they published them.

Advertising was biding its time. So were books. The first book I illustrated was an edition of Diderot's "Jacques le Fataliste", at Aragon's request

Then there was Jacques Prévert

My work has often been compared with Raymond Queneau's. I like his poetry very much, but his verbal 'mathematics' less so. I feel I have more in common with Prevert. For several months, we saw each other every week. We were working on a book. We just talked. But the text was never ready. Prevert told me to draw and I drew. Then he wrote.

It became a kind of political pamphlet, "Lettres des Iles Baladar", happy islands where gold is found, and which then turn into *presqu'iles* (peninsulas). That was in 1952, the German occupation was not long over, there was the Marshall Plan and all that.

Your first advertising work as such was for Galeries Lafayette.

I remember it well: it was for the sales, one week for household linen, the other for lace. At that time, just before the war, there were sales just of lace!

Much later, you did work for big causes, cultural campaigns and so on.

Yes, there was a time when I got more support from UNESCO than ad agencies.

But it was also your own decision, wasn't it?

Yes, I can even date it precisely. In 1962 I was preparing an exhibition for New York and I realised I would have to give priority to one particular activity. I plumped for painting, though I continued to agree to do the occasional poster, because it was something I enjoyed doing.

Your success as an illustrator and poster-designer at the expense — in France at least — of your work as a painter and sculptor, seems to have given you a complex. Is the idea behind this exhibition to get rid of that complex?

Yes, it annoys me. If a painter has a sense of humour, people say: he's a humorist who paints. But so-called pure art is sometimes much more commercial than so-called commercial art. The applied arts have very strict rules which have to be adhered to.

The two forms require completely different working methods: when you design a poster or draw an illustration, you are given a very complex brief which you try to reduce to essentials.

Painting is the opposite. It is a feeling or a simple shape one enriches or develops. At a certain point, the painting is finished. It's then that you try to understand what it means.

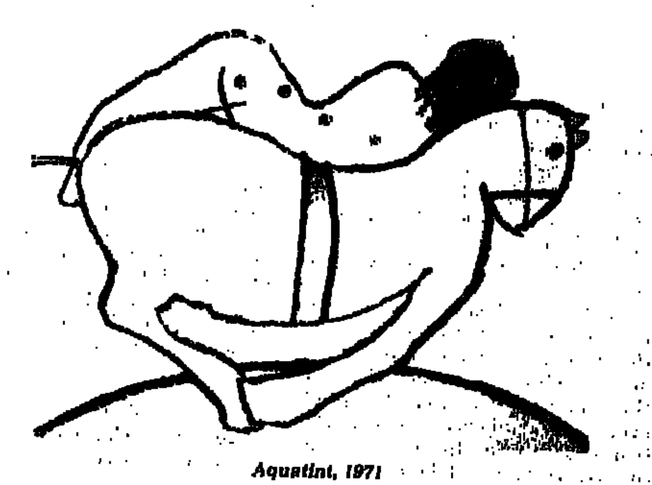
There are recurring themes in your collages — butterflies, clock-faces, bits of chairs, cut-out metal sheets. You're always looking for similarities, coincidences.

It's the object which gives the orders. A pebble placed on a blank sheet of paper can inspire a drawing. It's like throwing a stone into the water and observing the ripples.

Do you like the surrealists? Did you move in their circles?

No, not really. I'm less interested in surrealism than in showing inner reality.

The André François retrospective is on at the Palais de Tokyo, 13 avenue du President-Wilson, 75016 Paris, until September 8. André François (graphic art, paintings, drawings and theatre sets), published by Herscher, 232 pp, F430.



Aquatint, 1971

Popular Front

Continued from page 12

"Front Populaire 1936", by Louis Bodin and Jean Touchard, published by Armand Colin, 238pp, 120 francs.

"1936, Arts et Littérature", special issue of the magazine Europe, 210pp, 65 francs.

"Les Ecrivains et le Front Populaire", by Geraldi Leroy and Anne Roche, published by Presses de la Fondation des Sciences Politiques, 324pp, 160 francs.

The Washington Post

The 'Disappeared' Of South Africa

By Glenn Frankel

JOHANNESBURG — The man's hands were gripped tightly together and his head lowered as he described his wife's arrest three weeks ago and his two brief meetings with her in jail.

For a while, he said, she had been held with other political detainees at the central prison, where she had access to books, daily exercise and the company of others being held under South Africa's stringent state of emergency. Then, last week, she had been transferred to a security police headquarters for interrogation and held in solitary confinement. The lights burned 24 hours a day in her cell, meals were bleak and irregular, the toilet filthy, he said, while exercise was not allowed and the only reading matter was the Bible.

"This is going to break her absolutely," the man said, recalling her frightened look during his last visit. "She feels very scared."

Her situation, as described by her husband, who asked that their names not be used, was just one nameless case among thousands involving detainees since the government imposed a state of emergency one month ago and began rounding up opponents. Since then, human-rights advocates estimate, between 3,800 and 8,000 people have been detained without charge or access to lawyers. They can be held indefinitely until the end of the emergency, which officials hint could go on for months.

In one sense, the man whose wife is at security-police headquarters is lucky. He at least knows where his wife is. Despite official assurances to the contrary, rights advocates say that in a large majority of cases, family members have not been informed of the detentions.

The government contends the detentions are necessary to bring to an end two years of bloodshed that has claimed more than 2,000 lives and plunged this white-ruled country into a seemingly permanent political crisis. Citing "state security," Pretoria has refused to release the names or numbers of those detained and has threatened journalists with prosecution or deportation if they publish detainees' names, any "unauthorized" information about police activities or anything else deemed "subversive." This article was written under those restrictions.

Nonetheless, as the emergency enters its second month, some information is beginning to trickle from the prisons. Civil rights lawyers, using the limited powers of South Africa's judiciary, have begun to hammer some small chinks in the monolithic state security apparatus. Three detainees were released last week after lawsuits were brought on their behalf by relatives. In two cases, judges ruled that even using their sweeping emergency powers, police must have reasonable grounds to make arrests.

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Sanctions Against Pinochet?

THE chance death of a 19-year-old with Washington connections has given Americans a rare glimpse of the condition of state terrorism prevailing in Chile. Rodrigo Rojas graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in the District of Columbia and recently returned to visit his native country, which his mother had fled as a political refugee. He was in a group of students entering one of the slums that army units regularly invade and terrorize. Soldiers grabbed him and a companion, beat them, doused them with an inflammable fluid, set them afire and dumped them by a road. When they were finally brought to a hospital, they were denied suitable treatment. Rojas died last week.

Gen. Augusto Pinochet in 1973 overthrew an elected government that had seen the country slide into civil war. He set up shop as a dictator and, in 1980, wrote a constitution that could yet keep him in power for the extraordinary span of 25 years. At first many Chileans at least tolerated his rule as a relief from chaos. Their toleration has since thinned, but their efforts to find a path back to Chile's traditional stable democratic ways have foundered. Democrats from across the spectrum agreed on a broad blueprint called the National Accord a year ago, but have yet to follow through.

President Pinochet has played on the opposition's [illegible]isions and on a general apprehension about violence on th[illegible] that he partly provokes by closing off n[illegible]litical [illegible] from using the security forc[illegible] vi[illegible] help

Successive Ameri[illegible]tio[illegible]

The Washington Post

Cheaper Borrowing

THE CUT in the discount rate is a calcuated risk. For weeks the Federal Reserve Board has been weighing the advantages of lower interest rates against the threat of a sudden drop in the dollar's exchange rate. As time went on and the indications of poor economic performance accumulated, the Federal Reserve decided that exchange rate trouble was the lesser danger.

The White House, which urgently wants faster economic growth, had been pressing the Federal Reserve increasingly publicly for action. The discount rate — the interest rate at which the Federal Reserve lends to commercial banks — directly influences all the other interest rates at which money is borrowed. Reducing it half a point makes a difference. Although it is not a tremendous difference, it constitutes a push toward business expansion. There's an election coming in November, and still no sign of the acceleration that was supposed to start this summer.

The reasons for speeding up the economy were well known to the Federal Reserve, But it knows more about the international economy than the White House does, and it works very close to the foreign exchange markets. It wanted the decline in the U.S. interest rates to be matched by simultaneous declines in Japan and Germany. In the last two reductions of the American discount rate, last March and April, the Federal Reserve had organized similar and coordinated action with them. The Federal Reserve had been pressing them to accompany it once again, but so far both have refused.

Interest rates are higher here than in either Japan or Germany but now they will be not quite so much higher. It will be a little less rewarding for Japanese and German investors to send their money here. And if they send less money, the exchange rate of the dollar will drop farther and faster than it has already dropped. That would make serious trouble for the United States. But it would make even more serious trouble for the Japanese and Germans, who are already wringing their hands and wailing over the rapid appreciation of their currencies. Both have organized their economies around exports, and high exchange rates are very bad for exporters. Both have pleaded for greater stability in world exchange rates, and here they had an opportunity to make a contribution to it. Both refused, citing fears of inflation, although in both countries the current inflation rate is negative, meaning that prices are actually falling.

The exchange markets will tell whether the Federal Reserve has made the right choice. But amidst all the talk about the need for international economic coordination, this episode stands as evidence of the profound obstacles in getting the world's three great financial powers to work together.

Sanctions Against Pinochet?

Continued from page 15

restore democracy. President Carter carried the human rights cause, but it is fairly said that his policy of sanctions and toughness did not budge Gen. Pinochet and may have left him the stronger for having shown he could weather American disfavor. President Reagan, after an unsuccessful experiment with friendly persuasion, chose Chile as a place to demonstrate that he cared about advancing human rights and democracy not only in left-leaning and communist countries but also in right-wing, ostensibly anti-communist countries.

Especially since Pinochet rejected the National Accord, the administration has hardened its line. The general, however, has also hardened his. One possible result in Washington is to strengthen congressional sentiment for, and to diminish the force of administration opposition to, new economic sanctions. Chile and South Africa could become kind of a matched pair of targets. In both cases, the test should be whether sanctions will likely take the United States beyond expressing outrage into actually moving the political process in the direction of democracy.

Getting The Right Message

THINKING IN TIME: The Uses of History For Decision-Makers. By Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May. The Free Press. 329pp. $19.95.

THIS IS A BOOK by two Harvard professors who believe that "the fun to be had from reading history has it all over that of reading almost anything else about real people." Their love of history leads them to a fascination with decision-making in the American political process. Clearly they would agree with the former U.S. senator John Culver that "politics is the only game in town for adults."

The obvious joy of the authors in exploring history gives this book a sprightly, tolerant and deeply human flavor. But their subject — the relevance of history to government policy choices — is a deadly serious one.

In examining some crucial foreign policy decisions in the recent past that now seems mistaken, notably the Bay of Pigs invasion and the intervention in Vietnam, the authors avoid smug hindsight. They are modest and carefully avoid the temptation to claim too much for their proposition that a sense of history can be valuable in reducing the risk of poorly conceived decisions.

The two key words emphasized by Professors Neustadt and May in fashioning a historical method for decision-making are "prudence" and "caution". Take the time to ask hard questions before you decide, they repeatedly warn. "Enlightening questions are the point of every method we propose, questions that shed light almost regardless of the answers."

Their historical model for decision-making contains several elements.

First, an effort must be made to appreciate the problem at hand by separating its various elements into what is *Known*, what is *Unclear*, and what is *Presumed*.

"Focusing on matters of evidence provides momentary protection against the natural tendency to react to trouble by saying 'Damn! What do we do?' instead of 'What's our problem?'"

Secondly, since many policymakers with a sense of history frequently resort to historical analogies, the authors warn (very properly, I think) against an undiscriminating use of analogies. To avoid this danger, they suggest a second test: What are the *Likenesses* and the *Differences* between the current situation and the historical analogy?

In my view, the most abused and most costly historical analogy since World War II has been the frequent invocation of American policmakers of the "lessons of Munich". By appeasing Hitler at Munich, the lesson goes, we set the stage for World War II under even more dangerous circumstances. The Soviet Union, via Korea, Cuba and Vietnam, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, or Angola has created another potential "Munich". Let us therefore apply the lessons of Munich and intervene to stop these manifestations of Hitlerism and thus avert World War III.

I won't belabor the point here. But the defense-minded, inward-looking Soviet Union — paranoid after three nearly fatal invasions

By George McGovern

from the West — is not analogous to Adolf Hitler, an expansionist psychopath. Neither are Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, or the Sandinistas.

Historical analogies are fine if properly drawn, but they are dangerous in the hands of policymakers who lack the capacity to discern historical differences. Former secretary of state Dean Rusk, for example, thought that Ho Chi Minh was another Hitler — or at the least a puppet of another Hitler, Mao Tse-tung. The Vietcong in the South and Ho in the North represented another Munich challenge; therefore those with the Rusk point of view believed that we should stand against the beginning aggression of World War III just as we should have stood with Czechoslovakia against Hitler.

The third historical test recommended by Neustadt and May is "the Goldberg Rule". It is the question posed by Avram Goldberg, a New England retail executive who tells his store managers when they come with a problem, "Tell me the story." In other words, give me the historical background. Or as Neustadt and May put it, "What's the story?"

If President Jimmy Carter had asked that question, write May and neustadt, he would have learned that the supposedly newly discovered "Soviet Brigade" in Cuba, revealed in 1979, had been there since at least 1962. With that knowledge, he would not have assumed that the presence of Soviet troops in Cuba dramatically announced in 1979 called for a chilling denunciation and ultimatum to the Soviet Union which contributed to the death of SALT II.

Thinking in Time opens with a chapter entitled "Success Story" which deals with President John Kennedy's handling of the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. I doubtless represent a minority point of view, but I regard this crisis management as a "success" only because the wily Nikita Khrushchev was less willing than the youthful American president to risk World War III.

I believe that the Cubans wanted a small number of Soviet missiles, but not to attack the United States — ridiculous in that it would have assured the incineration of Cuba; rather they were seeking a deterrent against a more carefully planned second Bay of Pigs invasion. Although Neustadt and May ignore this historical probability, the Kennedy administration after suffering a painful reversal at the Bay of Pigs seriously considered both the assassination of Fidel Castro and a second invasion of Cuba. A small number of missiles capable of damaging Miami and a few other American targets was the probable deterrent needed to forestall this possibility. That Khrushchev was willing to surrender this Cuban option is a measure not so much of the Kennedy administration's wise use of history as of Khrushchev's realism and common sense.

I commend this book to lovers of history and to American policy makers who will heed the advice of its authors to use it with "caution" and "prudence".

George McGovern, the 1972 presidential nominee of the Democratic Party and former United States senator from South Dakota, was professor of history and political science at Dakota Wesleyan University 1949-1953.

An Atrocity In Chile

By Michael Specter

WASHINGTON — With a bundle of day lilies on one arm and her only surviving son at her side, Veronica de Negri told dozens of weeping friends on Saturday that her oldest child was "murdered" in Chile because he "dared to search for justice".

"I am so proud of Rodrigo," she said in an emotional, faltering speech after arriving at National Airport from Santiago. "I was tortured and when I saw my boy I remembered that pain. I knew how much my son suffered. Pinochet says he had a bomb, but I know the only bomb my son had was a camera."

The violent death last week of Rodrigo Rojas, 19, has drawn nationwide attention and put new pressure on the human rights policies of Chilean leader Gen. Augusto Pinochet. Rojas, a Washington resident since his mother became an exile in 1975, died in Santiago of severe burns on July 6 after returning to Chile to learn about his native land. Friends and human rights advocates said that he and a companion were brutally beaten by a Chilean army squad that drenched them in gasoline and set them both on fire. Chilean military officials deny all allegations of impropriety.

The U.S. State Department has called for a full investigation of the incident. Citing "failures of many past investigations in Chile to bring justice to those responsible for violent crimes," the department dispatched Robert S. Gelbard, a deputy assistant secretary for inter-American affairs, to Santiago.

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., on a visit to Santiago, sharply criticized the State Department for pressuring Chile on investigating Rojas's death, saying that the United States "ought to understand that Chile is one of two countries in the entire Latin American area that resists communism." The other was Paraguay. In response, a State Department spokesman said: "We stand by our statements calling for a prompt, thorough and completely impartial inquiry into the Rojas death."

De Negri called for the Reagan administration to halt economic aid to Pinochet's government, saying the money will be used "to kill, to burn, to arrest and to persecute," and not to encourage democracy.

As she spoke, new details emerged of the incident in which her son was burned. She said that she had spoken to many witnesses — as have U.S. officials — and they told her that her son and his companion, a young Chilean woman who remains in critical condition, were conscious when they were dumped in a ditch on the edge of Santiago.

"They crawled out of the ditch to seek help and they were like ghosts from another world," she said, repeating accounts she had received while in Santiago. "People wanted to help them, but they were so afraid."

Rojas had gone with a group of about 50 university students on July 2 to a shantytown to help rebuild houses that were destroyed by the military during a general strike. Rojas graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School here this year and planned to spend several months in Chile taking photographs. His mother said on Saturday that he was enraged by the suffering he saw. "The government is trying to say my son was a terrorist; that is one of their cheap lies," she said. "My son was buried because he had a camera."

She said that she had to buy the medicine doctors used to treat her son at Santiago's Posta Central Hospital, and that each day that she was there she had to purchase diapers for him and change them herself. "The day my son died the doctor called me asking for pills," she said. "When I arrived there without them a nurse said to me, 'I'm sorry, but you are supposed to supply the medicine'." She said that she had "deep admiration" for the doctors and nurses who treated her son and that she did not hold them responsible for his death.

Ariel Dorfman, a human rights activist who is close to Rojas's family, on Saturday repeated a charge that police in Chile prevented Rojas from being transferred from Posta Central to a hospital that was better equipped to handle victims of serious burns.

"It is hard to imagine the brutality of this murder," said Dorfman. "He was a fine young man, an innocent who was murdered for trying to find his roots. But this is the history of dictatorships. Pinochet has become more and more brutal, and perhaps he has finally made a fatal mistake. I can't tell you how much I grieve that the name of that mistake was Rodrigo Rojas."

Malcolm Coads adds from Santiago:

Pinochet has made his clearest statement yet that he intends to continue in office beyond the end of his current term, which expires in 1989. "We're not going to give up the government just for the sake of it," he said, referring to last week's two-day national strike calling for a rapid return to democracy. "This will continue beyond 1989." Another term was necessary to consolidate his government's achievements and prevent them being wasted by the politicians.

Pinochet rejected any changes to the constitution, under which a single candidate, named by the military commanders in chief, is to be put to a national plebiscite in 1989. The next presidential term ends in 1997.

Pinochet's statement was the flattest challenge yet to those in the military, including non-army members of the government junta, whose support for Pinochet appears to be wavering, or who may have considered encouraging legitimate elections in 1989.

In Santiago, 15 of the 18 opposition leaders accused by the government of security offenses for calling last week's strike, gave themselves up after a week in hiding. Among those who turned themselves in were Dr. Juan Luis Gonzales, president of the College of Physicians, and leaders of professional groups such as academics, engineers and teachers, as well as students.

Zimbabwe: Repression And Progress

(Glenn Frankel is completing a three-year tour this month as The Washington Post's southern Africa correspondent.)

HARARE, Zimbabwe — We had driven for more than an hour on a half-paved road to Tsholotsho, a desolate outpost of southwestern Matabeleland where armed dissidents and government troops had been attacking each other — and the civilians in between — for three years. Now we were standing on a bare patch of hard scrabble in front of a one-room hut listening to a young woman with a hungry, shivering baby in her arms.

She described in a quiet monotone the night when strangers came in a white Land Rover, its license plates concealed, and took away her husband, a schoolteacher, who was known as a supporter of an opposition political party. He had never come back, and the government denied any knowledge of his whereabouts. Neither my colleague nor I had the heart to ask if she thought he was dead.

Let me tell you about another mother and another baby. She was standing silently in the nursery of a small local hospital in Karoi in northwestern Zimbabwe, watching her tiny infant son struggle for life in an incubation machine. Before black rule six years ago, the only similar machines for premature infants were 120 miles away in the capital. Many of those babies died. This one lived.



Mr Robert Mugabe

For three years I have watched and reported as Zimbabwe, Africa's youngest country, wrestles with its ghosts and its destiny. While much of Africa has suffered bankruptcy and famine, this nation has retained its self-respect and a modest measure of prosperity by cautious economic management combined with a social conscience. Where once a small white minority ruled, now every adult can vote, every child can go to school and every baby has a better chance at survival.

I have also written of the extraordinary reconciliation between white and black, the apparent ease with which Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's government has forgiven past sins and put behind it the bitter seven-year independence war, a conflict that was the traumatic equivalent of our own American Civil War.

At the same time I have struggled to understand why the same leader who has so readily made peace with his former white enemies cannot engineer a similar rapprochement with his former black allies, the followers of opposition leader Joshua Nkomo.

Each year Mugabe has sent his troops, police and intelligence operatives into Matabeleland, ostensibly to root out the dissidents who profess loyalty to Nkomo even though he has disowned them. But the security forces' main victims are civilians, members of the Ndebele ethnic minority, who are inevitably intimidated, rounded up, tortured and, sometimes, killed.

Each year, too, Zimbabwe's frail institutions of public dissent grow weaker and more preyed upon. The recent arrests of two Catholic human rights activists, even though they were quickly released, are further proof that those who seek to hold the government accountable for its excesses do so at their own risk in the new Zimbabwe.

Meanwhile, men who themselves were victims of torture and brutality during the years of white rule now seem to have adjusted easily to employing the same repressive apparatus against dissenters.

Why does this happen?

Part of the answer is that Zimbabwe does have a genuine enemy. South Africa represents a real threat to this country's future, and there is strong evidence that Pretoria has armed at least some of the dissidents.

But much more of the answer lies in that supposedly forgotten independence war. While Zimbabwe's recovery has been little short of remarkable, the conflict left deep scars on all sides, and the brutal and corrosive impact of the violence still eats at this country's political soul.

Mugabe and many of his top officials spent a decade or more behind bars before joining their comrades in the bush. They felt betrayed by the British, who refused to bring Ian Smith's white government to heel, by the Soviets, who backed Nkomo's rival forces, and by the West in general, whose sanctions campaign against then-Rhodesia was a half-hearted farce.

Their years in the bush made these former guerrillas sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the rural population that often hid and fed them, and whose support eventually tipped the scales against white rule. That goes far in explaining why this government is one of the few in Africa to have committed substantial resources for large-scale programs to develop peasant agriculture, education and health.

But the war had other effects as well. Like most liberation movements, Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union became a hothouse of restless paranoia, hostility and conspiracy. Many died mysteriously, some at the hands of white assassins, others by the long knives of their own comrades. It is not surprising that Mugabe, the man who rode the tiger, cannot seem to climb down.

Paranoia is still a prominent feature of political life here. The tendency to characterize political opponents as "enemies," the use of detention without trial and other emergency powers inherited from the days of Smith, the frequent rights abuses — all can be seen as legacies of a war that should never have been fought and went on far too long.

Whether there is a lesson here for the whites of South Africa remains to be seen. If white rule does not survive, does it mean that the longer South Africans struggle against black rule and the crueler they are, the more likely it is that those who come to power will have been radicalized and brutalized by the process of winning their liberation?

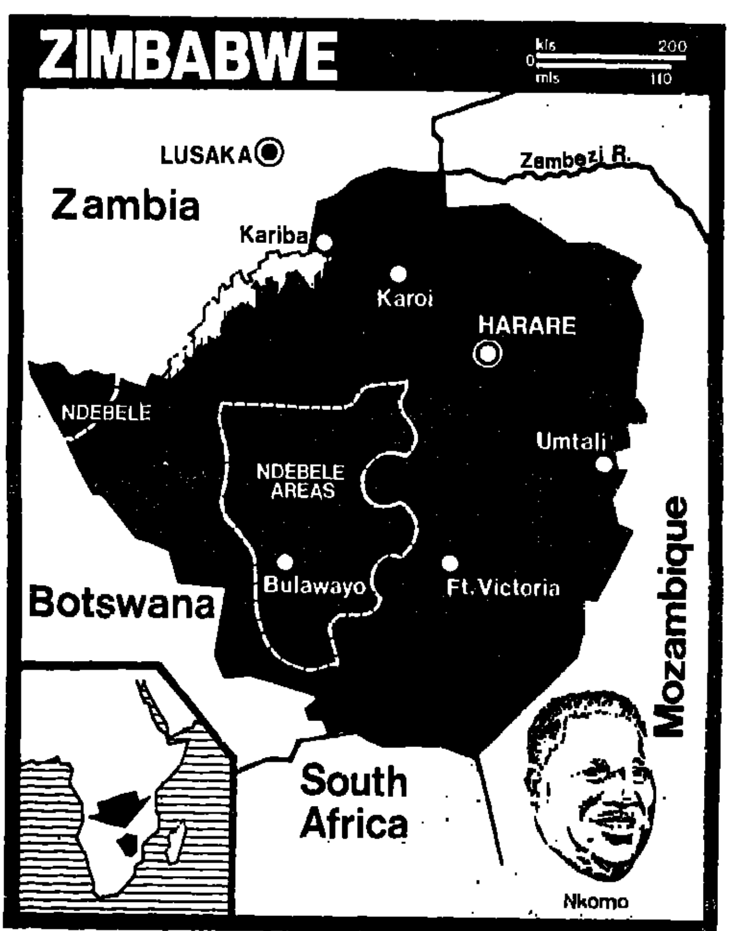
"When you engage in war, you brutalize everyone — the winners and the losers; you inculcate a military culture in everyone," said Willie D. Musarurwa, who spent nearly 11 years in prison before independence, and who was ousted last year as editor of the Sunday Mail newspaper here because he did not sufficiently toe the official line.

The men who govern Zimbabwe still seem to be running a liberation movement rather than a government. With a few noteworthy exceptions, most are not professionals with careers to fall back on, and few stand out as men of unquestionable competence and performance.

Their insecurity is not assuaged by Mugabe, their demanding, austere leader. His wife, Sally, has told interviewers that her husband can go from cold anger one minute to total forgiveness the next. But others believe there is a core of controlled, cold rage inside Robert Mugabe that never forgives and never forgets.

By Glenn Frankel

There are many pieces in the Mugabe puzzle: his Jesuit background, with its rigid division between the saved and the damned; his feeling that, having lost a decade in prison and now aged 62, he has no time to waste in achieving his national goals; his dedication to Marxism, with its liturgy of class struggle and identifiable enemies; his keen intellect that won him advanced degrees while in prison and keeps him on top of developments despite the fact that his inner circle of advisers is thin.



One factor that remains largely concealed is Mugabe's need to placate the various power blocs within his ruling party, and Zimbabwe's Shona-speaking majority. Divisions within these blocs are regional and tribal as well as ideological, and Mugabe's role is to hold together a consensus within a large and fractious family.

"It's like he's standing on a rolling log on a fast-flowing river," said a white business executive with a close and sympathetic view of the prime minister. "He has to work 24 hours day, seven days a week, just to keep himself upright."

That kind of atmosphere helps explain Mugabe's extreme caution in pursuing the socialist ideals he cherishes. It also explains why he focuses on "enemies," both domestic and foreign, for that is one way he can keep his factions united.

As a result, rather than yielding the people of Matabeleland, who constitute 20 percent of Zimbabwe's population, Mugabe's party seems intent on crushing them. The danger is that in the process it is creating a permanently disaffected minority — the very "enemies" Mugabe rails against.

In doing so, he has relied upon lieutenants like Enos Nkala, who shared a cell with the future prime minister over 10 years. Nkala is an Ndebele who joined Mugabe in breaking with Nkomo in 1963, bringing very few of his tribesmen with him.

But Nkala is a useful tool. Because he is an ethnic outsider with no power base of his own, Mugabe can rely upon his loyalty, and trust him in a way he cannot trust many others.

And Nkala is a hard man. He spent a total of 14 years behind bars, much of it in solitary confinement. It is an experience he refuses to discuss publicly, but the bitterness clearly runs deep. He locked up five of Nkomo's lieutenants last year, one of whom allegedly was badly tortured while in detention, and took apparent delight in threatening others with the same fate.

Nkala's reaction to torture allegations by Amnesty International and other human rights groups is to baldly deny everything and accuse the accusers of crimes. He said Amnesty had paid "known murderers" to supply it with information — a charge Amnesty officials deny. Asked in a February interview about claims by western diplomats that human rights abuses still occur, Nkala erupted. "You think we need these embassies and their foreign aid?" he asked. "We could close them down tomorrow, expel every diplomat, and Zimbabwe would still survive."

Many of Zimbabwe's friends contend that Nkala is an aberration and his elevation to the post of Cabinet minister in charge of police an error in judgment by Mugabe. But it was no mistake. In many ways Nkala and those who think like him represent an important part of Mugabe's strategy.

As time goes on, it is likely that civil liberties will be eroded even further, as they have been in most other African nations. The advent of the one-party state, which Mugabe is dedicated to achieving, will mean even fewer voices of dissent as well as further restrictions on an already docile press.

When Sunday Mail editor Musarurwa lost his job last year, the lesson of his sacking — don't make waves or your career will be jeopardized — was not lost on younger Zimbabwean journalists.

For whites, this erosion of human rights is disturbing but probably not crucial. More than half of the white population of 250,000 have left since independence. Those who remain do so because the life remains comfortable, profits reasonable and — most importantly — there is no place else to go. Some who left for South Africa have even begun trickling back after realizing that the nightmare of civil war they faced in Rhodesia may be repeating itself down south.

Mugabe has promised to rid Parliament of its 20 whites-only seats next year by constitutional means. But many whites believe the elimination of a racially based franchise and the shrinkage of the white population actually puts those who remain in a more secure position because they retain economic clout while becoming less of a political threat. Mugabe, who has never pretended to like them, has always insisted he needs them. And his cautious actions over the past six years reflect his words.

One white who has come to terms with the new Zimbabwe is Michael Auret, chairman of the country's Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, who was a tough critic of the Smith regime. Auret was detained briefly by Nkala and he has been outspoken in condemning torture and other signs of repression in recent years. Yet he still believes Zimbabwe has a bright future.

The government's commitment to rural development and its performance in the fields of education and health leave him with great hope. "Of course there are many problems, but I think it's working remarkably well," he says. "Mugabe is truly a great and popular leader. The vast majority is far better off than they were during the days of Smith."

Auret may be right. Many western diplomats and local businessmen are convinced that Mugabe will continue to show caution and pragmatism in steering this country toward his socialist goals. But it is less certain how he will deal with those he perceives as obstacles.

I keep recalling the forlorn people of Tsholotsho and a bleak Friday morning before last June's parliamentary election when Mugabe ventured there for a brief campaign stop.

He didn't stay long in what he clearly saw as enemy territory. There were no handshaking forays into the sullen crowd that had been rounded up for the occasion. Others on the platform laughed and smiled and pretended to ignore the ugly atmosphere, but Mugabe was having none of that. Instead, he slumped in his chair, a grim expression on his face as he stared at the audience, then gave a 20-minute speech that concluded with a not-so-veiled warning.

"If you vote for ZAPU (Nkomo's opposition party), you are voting to support dissidents," he told the crowd. "ZAPU will lose, and then where will you be?"

Mugabe's electoral prediction was correct — the country voted overwhelmingly for his party, while Tsholotsho gave a huge majority to Nkomo. And Mugabe's question hangs like a dark cloud over the promising experiment that is Zimbabwe.

Rotten to the corps

Martin Walker reports from Moscow on diplomats who are feeling the pinch

LAST week, the French President arrived in Moscow. This week, the Soviet Foreign Minister arrived in London. Soon after that, the West German Foreign Minister will have talks at the Kremlin and shortly after that the foreign ministers of the two superpowers will meet to arrange the summit later this year of their respective leaders.

Amid all this top-level contact, why exactly do we need diplomats, and all the expensive paraphernalia of embassies and overseas allowances and subsidised school fees and index-linked pensions that go with them?

For over a century, since the invention of the telegraph, embassies have been expensive and superior postmen, passing on the messages that are transmitted with speed for the political masters at home. The age of the jet and the hot-line has reduced even further the role of the diplomatic middle man. Three recent events in the British diplomatic community in Moscow have brought this hoary old topic to the fore again.

On July 1, Sir Iain Sutherland, died suddenly in London. He was the ambassador here when I arrived to start the Guardian bureau. A likeable man of diffident charm, and shrewdness, he cultivated with some care his reputation for the mild eccentricity of never quite remembering people's names.

At one of his last parties in Moscow, I waited in the receiving line on the very grand staircase (where a Tsarist officer had once blown out his brains on hearing that his mistress had left him) immediately behind two rather senior Soviet diplomats. "I wonder what he will call us this time," one of them muttered to the other, in tones of benevolent affection.

Sir Iain had arrived when relations were sunk in the post-Afghan freeze and about to chill all over again with the shooting down of the Korean airliner. When he retired last year, relations were blooming after the successful Gorbachev visit to Britain. Sir Iain's old-fashioned diplomatic skills doubtless played a part in the improvement and his departure from Moscow was celebrated with all due panache as he was bagpiped aboard his train at the Leningrad station, much to the bewilderment of the Soviet passengers.

The other sad event was the resignation from the diplomatic service of one of Sir Iain's brightest young first secretaries, a man who could well have expected to follow him as ambassador one day. The Viscount Asquith was a considerable asset to British diplomacy. He spoke good Russian, travelled assiduously, and enjoyed a remarkably wide range of Soviet acquaintances.

When he returned to England, with a wife and children and a family home to maintain, he lost his overseas allowances and found himself on something like £16,000 a year. This may be almost double the average industrial wage, but it is little enough reward for a man whose contemporaries in the City consider that sort of sum as so much loose change. Viscount Asquith has now gone to the Daily Telegraph as a leader writer, and almost doubled his salary.

The whole question of diplomatic pay has just risen to an ugly head in Moscow. The embassy has recently been visited by the joint Foreign Office and Treasury review team which has probed into their overseas allowances and cut them sharply. And for the first time in memory, the British diplomats have refused to concur and have appealed back to London.

These allowances are hardly princely. One of the impressive young second secretaries here, who has made himself into an expert on Soviet relations with the Third World, makes £12,000 a year and another £3,000 in allowances, including his £600 for proficiency in Russian. Nitpicking is the rule on allowances. Since tennis is considered a diplomatically useful pastime, for example, part of the cost of a tennis racket is allowed. But if a diplomat has no tennis racket, the allowance is thereupon cut.

This time, the pettiness has been breathtaking. On the grounds that the diplomats have had a six per cent increase in pay since the last review, allowances have been in effect cut to a degree which nullifies their pay increases. The reviewers have also killed off little Horace, the notional child who was assumed to exist in each diplomatic family for the purpose of calculating the allowance.

Now all this may make excellent sense at a time of stringent cost-cutting in Whitehall. But it is not the way to attract young folk of talent into Her Majesty's diplomatic service. And in the KGB's home city, the security implications of impoverished diplomats are becoming a matter of considerable concern.

We are trying to run a diplomatic service suitable for a great power, without the means to do so. We maintain in Moscow an embassy that is outnumbered only by the Americans, and getting on for twice the size of the French or the Italians or even the Japanese, all of whom do far more trade with the Soviet Union.

We field an internal chancery whose Kremlinologists are widely regarded as the best in Moscow, and an external chancery of great professionalism. Our embassy still commands the finest site in the city, just across the river from the Kremlin, and the cost of our diplomatic pretensions here probably outweighs our influence, and is kept manageable only by driving down salaries and rewards to the point where the future quality and loyalty of our diplomats is now at great risk.

Coincidentally, one of the best informed and most effective ambassadors in Moscow is also due to leave this summer. Singapore's Tony Siddique runs a tiny embassy of less than half a dozen, has built up the Asean group of South East Asian ambassadors into a formidable team, hustled a great deal of trade and feels little need of a vast chancery staff to tell him what is up in the Kremlin when he can swap information with Western journalists and well-staffed Western ambassadors.

Sooner or later, we shall have to decide what we need from our foreign service, whether perhaps one day there might be an EEC embassy in Moscow serving all common needs, rather than the wasteful duplications of the present.

Perhaps we should widen the career opportunities of our diplomats as the French do, whose last ambassador to Moscow, Jean-Bernard Raimond, is now the Foreign Minister. Perhaps, we should put up ambassadorships to the highest bidder, which the American pattern of jobs for the big donors of campaign funds sometimes resembles.

But we cannot go on trying to run a Rolls Royce of a foreign service on increasingly rationed amounts of two-star petrol.

Letters to the Editor are welcomed but not all can be acknowledged. We don't 'like' cutting them but sometimes this is necessary to get them in the page, — short letters stand a better chance. Send them to The Guardian Weekly, PO Box 19, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1DD England.

A hunk of good bread

By Ralph Whitlock

"YOU always refer to a *hunk* of bread and a *chunk* of cheese, never the other way round," my father used to insist.

The parlance must have had its origin in a time when bread was eaten in hunks, not in slices, and that wasn't so very long ago, either. When working with the men in the fields as a boy I used to practise doing the same as they did, namely, carving out mouthfuls of bread and cheese with a horn-handled, all-purpose knife and conveying them together to the mouth by the hand which still held the knife — an exercise requiring more skill than you might think.

My paternal grandmother, who was a widow, used to go gleaning at harvest-time, to collect stray grains to eke out the winter bread supply. Taking his payment in kind, the miller ground it into flour, and grandmother baked weekly batches of loaves in her cottage bread-oven until the supply gave out. My father remembered it as bread of superb quality, though as a boy he had for comparison sour, grey Workhouse bread, of which paupers were allocated two loaves per week

Steel rolling mills were introduced about 1874, the year when my father was born, so the flour his mother used was ground in the old stone mill which had operated for centuries past. It had the drawback that the flour didn't keep well, but for local consumption that didn't matter. The new steel mills produced flour that (a) would keep better, (b) would produce a white flour by the extraction of the wheat germ and bran and, (c) offered additional profit through the sale of the wheat germ and other by-products

Also the white flour, being mostly pure starch, would readily absorb water, making it possible to obtain several extra loaves per sack of flour. An opponent of the new technique coined the phrase that "modern baking was making water stand upright."

The invention of the steel rolling mill coincided approximately with the arrival of the first regular shipments of wheat from the American and Canadian prairies to Britain. They spelt the doom of Victorian high farming and induced the agricultural depression which prevailed, except in times of war, for the next century.

Because they dominated the market the imported wheats dictated the development of the milling industry, which adapted its machinery to suit the hard wheats produced by the hot summers of the Middle West. Hence arose the legend, endlessly repeated, that the soft British wheats, produced in the cool, damp climate of Britain, could not alone make good bread. Generations of British farmers have suffered from the myth, though logic alone should demonstrate that perfectly good bread was made in England in the centuries before 1874.

American farmers have been having a hard time in recent years. World surpluses of grain have made their harvests virtually unsaleable at economic prices, and farm bankruptcy sales have become a common feature in the prairie states. It would, one would be disposed to imagine, be the very worst time for a couple of British farmers to emigrate to the States and introduce their own style of farming.

Yet that is what Peter Brewer and Colin Withers have done, with considerable success. They are operating in the State of Missouri, where, when Brewer first visited in the 1970s, farmers were doing very well, with a system based on corn (maize) and soyabean. It looked so much more attractive than their set-up in England that the two young farmers decided to stake a claim. By the time they were ready to start, however, in the spring of 1983, prospects were very different.

They did so poorly with their first crop of soyabeans, which local farmers told them was the only feasible cash crop for the district, that they began to think nostalgically of their wheat-fields back in England. "No use here," said their neighbours, but within two years the newcomers were harvesting 100 bushels of wheat per acre, more than three times the 32-bushel average for the area. What they had done was to introduce their familiar British programme, which differed in several important respects from the American.

The Americans were using their traditional hard variety of wheat, whereas the British pair introduced British soft varieties. The American system involves applying all the fertilizer at the time of the autumn sowing, whereas we in Britain supply it in instalments, making several applications during the growing cycle. We also employ growth regulators, to discourage the plants from devoting too much of their resources to stem and leaf growth, and we use fungicides and insecticides liberally.

Under this regime the old varieties, familiar to me in the 1950s would probably fall down flat in the first summer storm, and evidently the older American varieties can't cope with it either. But over the past few decades, British plant-breeders have bred a succession of new varieties capable of responding splendidly to such intensive treatment.

The irony of the situation is that these are all varieties of soft wheats. It will develop interestingly if American farmers decide to switch to them as being more profitable. That could easily happen, but for one snag. As elsewhere, the American grain surplus is so mountainous that for the foreseeable future it is doubtful whether any crops can be really profitable. If the supply of hard wheats did dry up, I wonder how the continued excellence of our bread would be explained!

Holmes comforts

By Nancy Banks-Smith

TEARING off his whiskers, his hump, his hat and the wart on his nose, the old bookseller stood revealed as none other than Sherlock Holmes. "Watson!" he cried.

The curious thing is that it wasn't Watson. Admittedly it was not unlike the man who has claimed to be Watson in previous Sherlock Holmes series, for it is a sad fact that one is born into this world either thin and interesting or fat and affable, so the newcomer had a 50 per cent chance of getting it right.

But why did Holmes of all people not notice in The Return of Sherlock Holmes (Granada) that his best friend no longer looked like David Burke but bore a distinct resemblance to Edward Hardwicke? These are deep waters.

I am accustomed to this sort of thing in American soaps where everyone is prepared to throw their arms round anyone and call it mother. I attribute this to the great strides made in medical science. Plastic surgery and sex changes are now so routine that you are never sure if mother has had a little nip and tuck rendering her unrecognisable to all but the family dog.

Not that Jeremy Brett is, strictly speaking, Sherlock Holmes. What we have here is a bravura impression of the way Holmes would have been played at, say, the old Lyceum. You can smell the hot crimson plush and the stinging whiff of oranges from the Gods. I didn't know anyone, with the possible exception of Quentin Crisp, still carried on like that. He draws his breath with a hiss and expels it with a "Ha!" With the specious explanation that he feels a bit stiff, he flings his arms back like the herald Mercury new lighted on a heaven-kissing hill. That'll knock their socks off in the stalls.

His entrance as the old bookseller — hump, hat and horsehair exploding from every orifice — would have drawn a "For heaven's sake, Holmes," from anyone less loyal than Watson. I would be inclined to say that the wart on the nose was a bit over the top if we weren't already well over the top and on our way down the other side.

A bland new Dream

By Michael Billington

BILL ALEXANDER'S bland picturesque production of A Midsummer Night's Dream at Stratford on Avon is the fourth RSC revival of the play in a decade. This is too much of a good thing. It is a symptom of the way the same few gilt-edged Shakespeare hits are coming round with ever-increasing frequency while the less popular works (like King John and Cymbeline) gather dust. It also means that directors are driven each time into a frantic quest for novelty.

On this score, Mr Alexander's production promises more than it delivers. It starts in an indeterminate modern Athens where Hippolyta (supposedly a conquered Amazonian Queen) wears a slinky black cocktail number out of Private Lives and where the men in their bum-freezing cutaway jackets look like a convention of bellhops. I am all for modern dress but it must, as Bogdanov's Romeo and Juliet proves, be specific, relevant and thought through.

We then move into a darkly sinister William Dudley forest where everything is on a magnified inhuman scale. Puck clambers across a gigantic cobweb like Burt Lancaster scaling the rigging in the Crimson Pirate. Kate Greenaway fairies perch on Brobdignagian flower petals. Titania curls up on a leaf shaped like a Botticelli seashell.

My objection to all this is that it doesn't actually lead anywhere and that exotic design has become a substitute or a directorial concept. If the wood is meant to be a creepy, unnerving, life-changing place (a mixture of Arthur Rackham and William Golding) why are the fairies in their page-boy and Romany costumes such a soppy, spiritless lot? If the sexual tension between Oberon and Titania is producing disorder in the natural world, why is Garard Murphy's fairy king such a prettified, sequined, sub-Helpmann creature? And if the lovers are meant to be enriched by their night in the enchanted forest, why do they emerge looking so serenely unaffected? This is a play about people being put through a profoundly disturbing experience; but here they seem less strange than they might be riding on a ghost train.

If the production has any success, it is with the Mechanicals who are a dedicated Little Theatre Guild group. David Haig's Quince is the eternal bossy director with his despatch case, glasses on a chain and little beckoning gestures of encouragement.

Peter Postlethwaite's Bottom, with his hair arranged in three thatches like a cottage loaf, is also a nice display of untrammelled amateurish ego. And I like the idea of the playscene being given in blackberries and tights with Brechtian touches such as a halter representing Starveling's dog. But, good as the Mechanicals are, you feel they have for the most part been given costumes but haven't quite discovered the characters who belong inside them.

That applies to much of this production: it is decorative but hollow. The one performer who transcends the prevailing blandness is Janet McTeer who doubles as a languorously sexy Hippolyta and an impassioned, bristling Titania. She throws the wimpish Oberon to the ground with a flick of the wrist, angrily rejects his assumed sovereignty and falls breathily for Bottom crying, in tones of rapt wonderment, "Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful."

Ms McTeer (a superb Rosalind for the Royal Exchange) alone brings the quality of magic to this Dream through her specific gravity and emotional intensity. Critics should stop comparing her to Vanessa Redgrave and admit she is uniquely, definably herself.

Otherwise this is a strangely rootless production, lacking that vital Shakespearean sense of minds transfigured by experience. It has some happy visual touches such as the walls of the Athenian palace finally parting to reveal the fairies looking in from the crepuscular wood. But I feel strongly that it should not be left to the designer to supply the sense of mystery: that should come from a spirited reanimation of the text.

Porgy and bliss

Tom Sutcliffe at Glyndebourne

IT IS likely that Glyndebourne will never have a triumph like this again. The coup of presenting the first British staging of Gershwin's neglected masterpiece has earned the Sussex festival huge artistic rewards, together with an extraordinary standing ovation (virtually unique here).

The triumph above all is Gershwin's. Far from there being a conflict (as Clancy Sigal has hinted) between his melodic facility, his ability to score popular hits and furnish us with some of the greatest songs of the century, and his serious dramatic ambition, the greatness of Porgy and Bess is precisely that it so perfectly matches its means and its ends.

It is not, it seems to me, a statement about oppression, but about freedom. The tale is of southern Black poverty, but it was to the riches of that South Carolina negro culture and society that Gershwin responded. Folk-jazz with its profoundly moving melodic, choral and verbal elements gave him the authentic means to an astonishing cry of faith — and that at precisely a time when Alban Berg in Lulu seemed to be saying, on one level, the opposite. Gershwin, who admired Berg's Wozzeck, who was friendly with Schoenberg on the tennis courts as well as professionally, is the other pole of modern music.

Glyndebourne as an institution has served Gershwin ideally. This was a huge investment for the festival, which has lavished scrupulous preparation and generous expense on a very complex show. The casting by Brian Dickie is miraculous, without flaw. The excitement of hearing wonderful singing where there is no break between the emotional intention and the delivery of the sound, where the art is not put on but natural and authentic, where the heart of the character is the heart of the performer, is what opera should be always about.

But the physical impact in terms of volume and sheer performing energy, with the violence and the love-making, the fights and the dancing, is reinforced by the intimacy of this theatre, with the stage extended over the orchestra pit. Because this is not a theatre for Broadway routines, because the auditorium is small, this Porgy and Bess is focused not on performance values but on the raw truth behind them. And nothing gets in the way of that power.

There may be some kind of commercial compensation in that the video rights granted to the Preminger 1959 film have now expired. The show can scarcely transfer to London without huge subsidy, though it will return to Glyndeborne. But Trevor Nunn's staging goes out of its way, as the first British production, to follow tradition.

John Gunter's set of rickety, declining Catfish Row follows the two level approach of the original production and presents the expected courtyard tenements. It's hard to imagine that more people could have been crammed on stage. Porgy lacks his goat-cart, and staggers on crutches and a twisted leg. It was either the goat-cart or Simon Rattle in the pit — an easy choice.

In a bold departure from tradition, Nunn has Porgy cast aside his crutches in the closing bars as the back of the set sweeps open, and painfully, haltingly start the journey to New York and Bess. Daring, but utterly apt. Bess, after all, is an elusive, perhaps unreal ideal.

When a staging and musical performance are both so consummate as this, the art that goes to make things work does not advertise. Simon Rattle's great merit is that he is in no way embarrassed by the Broadway factor in Gershwin's instrumentation and rhythms and climaxes. He makes those conventions that some may wrongly consider vulgar tell, while pacing the piece sublimely, and at the same time encouraging the fullest and most expansive choral and orchestral delivery. This is some of the most exciting music-making I have been lucky to hear. Rattle's genius responds ideally to Gershwin's.

Trevor Nunn has plainly achieved a superb rapport with his black cast.

Among the star performances Willard White's astonishing Porgy sets the prime and most emotionally powerful example. This is his part today, no doubt, and he manages exactly to bear the message of faith without risking becoming maudlin or sentimental: that's a real achievement in such a gloriously moist work. Harolyn Blackwell, who does the first Summertime as Clara, sends thrills down the spine.

Cynthia Clarey as Serena gives a wonderfully strong, firm performance (and it's fascinating to hear her in Gershwin after her Wexford triumph in Handel last year). Cynthia Haymen, after a slightly nervious start, proved her mettle as a luscious, inspirational, utterly compelling Bess.



Whoopi Goldberg as Celie in Steven Spielberg's The Color Purple.

Pigment of the imagination

CINEMA by Derek Malcolm

IT HAS taken an interminable time for Steven Spielberg's **The Color Purple** to reach these shores, and no doubt the unkind would say that it takes an interminable time to sit through, too.

Spielberg's careful and perfectly honourable adaptation of Alice Walker's novel, is, in fact, 154 minutes long, and ends with a flourish more than once. Its main trouble is that it tries so hard to be everything to everybody that in the end you wonder whether it is more about our reactions to it than about Celie, the heroine, herself.

Celie, if you need reminding, is a black woman from the South who somehow survives a life of degradation and hardship which would render most people permanently enfeebled in both mind and body. Raped by her father, with the resulting children then sold, she then must face a husband who fancies her sister and uses her as a drudge. He even hides the letters from her sister which would have told her of a new life in Africa and that her children have been found.

Celie is saved mostly by her own indomitable spirit over these 40 years but also by her friendship with Shug, the love of her husband's life, a blues singer with whom she has a lesbian relationship and from whom she learns the meaning of freedom. Walker's book is composed entirely of letters through which we get to know everything we need about each of the characters and the world they live in. Spielberg's storyline has to be something different.

What he has done is not to "Disneyfy" nor even to skate over the more depressing moments but to point up, in fairly simple terms, the main struts which hold the story together. Every episode underlines a moral of a sort and then seems to turn away from it with a saving dollop of humour, just in case we might become either too riven or too bored.

There are a few really bad mistakes around, such as the assumption that all black men treated their women like cows, which may be true as a generalisation but cannot be stated without the caveat that the probable reason for them doing so was the way those men were treated by the whites. The cut-in African scenes are also totally inadequate, looking as if they were filmed on the backlot at Universal with a few covering big game shots to enliven them. That is not true, but that's what it looks like.

Yet the film remains an effective piece of popular cinema not only because it oozes sincerity rather than sophistication from every pore but because Spielberg is, after all, a consummate craftsman and has given it his best endeavours. He also has a cast a much worse director could gain plaudits by effectively orchestrating.

Perhaps Whoopi Goldberg as Celie reacts rather than acts. But she still does so with an entirely natural dignity, and anyway has the sort of presence without which an actress of the quality of Margaret Avery as Shug would have eaten her alive in their scenes together. Danny Glover, Oprah Winfrey, Adolph Caesar and a good many other black actors also seize their opportunity with the avidity of hitherto semi-starved performers.

There are, throughout the film, some very considerable sequences and set-pieces for which those around Spielberg deserve equal praise, like art director Robert Welch and set designer Virginia Randolph. What The Color Purple hasn't got is the book's infinite complexity, and its often double-edged sword which cuts like lightning through hypocrisy. It may very well make you weep, but beware that your tears are not those of the crocodile.

The importance of the Spielberg film lies a lot in the very fact that so many millions have seen and will see it. The importance of Dennis O'Rourke's **Half Life** makes one hope that many millions will, if only through the agency of television. This is quite obviously one of the most extraordinary documentaries of recent years, being a carefully unemotional though deeply felt summation of the story of the Marshall Islanders, particularly the inhabitants of Rongelap and Utirik, on whose territory the United States dropped at least 66 atomic and hydrogen bombs in the decade after the second world war.

O'Rourke is mainly concerned with Bravo, the first hydrogen bomb, more than 1,000 times the size of the Hiroshima blast, which exploded the equivalent of 15 million tons of TNT above Bikini Atoll on the morning of March 1, 1954. The children of Rongelap, 100 miles away, went out to play in the "snow" that resulted a few hours later. So did those at Utirik. They were all eventually evacuated but live with the United States' Government's "mistake" to this day. On Rongelap, at the time of the film-making, there was only one child who had not had surgery for thyroid tumours.

The facts, and the documented history of them, are so terrible that one could have readily forgiven O'Rourke, the Australian film-maker, the kind of polemical fury he never uses, particularly as the Americans were handed the territories on trust by the United Nations, with President Reagan saying many years later: "You'll always be family to us." Words almost fail one.

But images don't fail O'Rourke, who stumbled on the story by accident when his plane landed on Rongelap and who then pursued it remorselessly for months. He went to the Pentagon, to the US Department of Energy, to the defence authorities, to doctors and to the islanders themselves. The argument he then sets before us is incontrovertible.

This is no blast from the anti-nuclear left but a carefully structured and reasoned argument from a film-maker who readily admits that few other countries in the world would have supplied him with as much information as freely as did America. And the picture he builds, slowly but surely, is of the destruction not only of an environment but also of a whole culture.

Was it really true that the wind changed direction suddenly and upset calculations? Perhaps we will never know, but what this film says about racism, hypocrisy and downright perfidy thereafter scarcely bears thinking about. Yet this is not so much a horror film, real rather than imagined, as a testimony to the dignity and good nature of those afflicted, referred to in newsreels as "savages" as late as 1959.

That is O'Rourke's achievement. In so effectively skewering the guilty, he has allowed their victims to speak for themselves. This is not only a very necessary film. It is an exemplary one too.

BOOKS

Unhappy warrior

By Kenneth O. Morgan

MONTY: THE FIELD MARSHALL, 1944-1976, by Nigel Hamilton (Hamish Hamilton, £15).

THE British do not make much fuss of retired military heroes. Elsewhere, literally from China to Peru, superannuated generals resurface as political grandees. The Americans propelled generals Washington, Grant and Eisenhower into the White House. The French founded military cults to venerate Bonaparte, Petain or de Gaulle, while the Germans beggar description.

Not so in Britain. Marlborough, Clive and Wellington were mightily unpopular in their later years. Haig and his associates became popular scapegoats for a generation. Lord Montgomery, our outstanding military commander since Waterloo, seems to have undergone much the same fate. He lived on for 30 years beyond the German surrender at Luneberg Heath. His peacetime posts all brought bitter controversy. His retirement inaugurated a fresh series of rows with old colleagues from President Eisenhower downwards.

Like Britain herself (to quote Dean Acheson), Monty had lost an empire and failed to find a role. His interference in public affairs led to newspaper headlines, "Fade away, Monty!" His last years were scarred by family feuds. He died, it seems, virtually friendless and alone.

This sombre finale is the theme of Nigel Hamilton's magnificent last volume of his trilogy. It divides naturally into two sections. The first, in which 500 pages cover eight months of warfare down to VE Day, sees Montgomery engaged in continuous battles with his real enemies — the Americans. (Hitler, Rommel and other Germans are very seldom mentioned.)

Mr Hamilton describes an endless series of clashes, major and minor, between allied generals. Monty is furious when displaced as C-in-C of land forces after his victory in Normandy. He attacks Eisenhower's dispersal of effort, and the mistakes that led to heavy US defeats in the Ardennes. He has the satisfaction of taking over command of US 1st and 9th Army groups to clear up the mess. He quarrels violently with Bradley, Patton, Hodges and virtually every other American in sight. Worst of all, after crossing the Rhine, he is stopped by Eisenhower from marching on to Berlin. Somehow, the war was won.

In peacetime, Monty was adrift. Each assignment was, to some degree, unsatisfactory. His time in Germany after VE Day brought disagreements with the Attlee government over postwar reconstruction. His two years as CIGS incurred the wrath not only of the politicians but also of military colleagues such as Tedder and Slim. SHAPE and NATO produced new storms, often comic, with French prima donnas such as de Lattre de Tassigny, and more trouble with Eisenhower.

All this left a legacy, fought out with the unique egoism of retired warlords, in the memoirs of Eisenhower, Bradley and, supremely, Montgomery himself. Television programmes generated a near libel action from Auchinleck. Even an eightieth birthday party at El Alamein broke an old friendship with de Guingand. It was all very sad. His brilliant aide, Bill Williams, wrote of "things that chilled the heart . . . deeply embarrassing to the human race."

Some may consider Hamilton's 500,000 words excessive. To this reviewer, the detail is utterly absorbing; the book is not a page too long. On the other hand, like Monty himself, the author is better on generals than politicians. He rather misinterprets Attlee's strategic outlook and ignores Monty's remarkable relationship with the late Lord Shinwell.

Again, the relentless accumulation of warts almost obliterates the face beneath. Monty was impossible, vain, cantankerous, self-destructive. Yet he was also a field commander of genius who made a unique contribution to the permanent defeat of the scourge of fascism. The rows with the Americans usually arose because his military judgment was superior to theirs.

He was revered by his men, not least because he was far more cautious in avoiding needless loss of life than Haig and his ilk ever were. Beyond the petty backbiting, the historical reputation of this unhappy warrior stands secure.

In the asylum of dreams

By J. G. Ballard

THEATRE OF SLEEP, by Guido Almansi and Claude Beguin (Picador, £10.95).

FORTUNATELY for us all, the dream resists interpretation. Freud's royal road to the unconscious soon showed itself prone to delays and diversions, and by now is safely ensnarled in the traffic of rival theorists.

For Freud the essence of dreams lay in the expression of repressed desires, while for Jung they offered reassuring glimpses of the collective unconscious and the primordial models of social behaviour. More recently, Charles Rycroft has stated that dreams are a kind of involuntary poetic activity, but Francis Crick has suggested that dreams may be necessary to rid the brain of parasitic modes of behaviour.

However, as the immense richness of the dreams in this excellent collection demonstrates, no theory ever seems likely to account for those strange safaris on which each of us sets out every night across the width of our own heads.

Reason rationalises reality for us, defusing the mysterious, but at the cost of dulling the imagination. In their preface the editors, a husband and wife team, quote Dr Charles Fisher of the Mount Sinai Medical Centre: "Dreaming permits each and every one of us to be quietly and safely insane every night of our lives." This statement, they believe, well describes the situation of writers, who are forced by their readers to be more rational and conformist than they would like.

Literary dreams, they go on to argue, have a vital role to play in luring the reader outside his usual daily life. Frankly, I doubt this; in my experience a good many writers have notably less imagination than their readers, and cling to the props of bourgeois life like seasick passengers looking around for the furniture during a rough channel crossing.

"Comrade Lenin," a group of Russian revolutionaries once asked the great leader, "are we allowed to dream?" The editors maintain that his answer should have been "no," since dreams are an escape "from the common world of waking people into the private fortress of the dreamer . . . in Orwell's 1984 disobedience to Big Brother starts in a dream."

To their credit, the editors come down firmly on the side of the anarchic, mysterious and ultimately inexplicable nature of dreams. Drawing almost entirely from the Western literature of the last 3,000 years, from fiction and poetry, biography and philosophy, their choice ranges from Aristotle and Apollinaire to Rabelais, Richard Wagner, and Nathaniel West. Some of the dreams, like those of the surrealist Robert Desnos and the hapless Iranian premier Mohammad Mossadegh, are only a few lines long, though nonetheless poignant, while others, by Borges and Roald Dahl, are complete short stories.

Given that there are few more tiresome pastimes than listening at length to other people's dreams, it is to the editors' credit that their anthology never wearies, unlike the dreams in Freud's case histories, which soon seem deadeningly monotonous. I finished this selection of some 200 dreams feeling marvellously relaxed, which I assume I had in fact been.

Do any instant theories spring to mind? No, thankfully, though one cannot help noticing that the narrative structure of dreams, whatever the subject, seems remarkably unchanged down the centuries. The editors quote from A Grammar of Dreams, in which David Foulkes states: "The typical REM dream has a linear narrative structure, much like the structure of a verbal narrative; first this, then this, then this, with the various 'this's' having some sensible thematic connection with one another."

Old-fashioned story-telling, in other words, with its ageless appeal and direct access to the great myths and legends that pave the floors of the individual psyche. Within the realm of the dream, Kafka is a contemporary author, and quite sufficiently up to the minute. No post-modernist meta-fictions, no room for the nouveau roman at the inn of the night.

In terms of film technique, no split screens, zooms or chroma-key inlay, though one could argue that the dream cinetographers have an overfondness for slow motion. But I have never seen a dream with a sub-title, or gone into a flashback, though the constant watching of television, apart from dimming the frontal lobes, must have some effect on the way the optical centres of the brain shape their interior world.

But perhaps, as in everything else, we already have machines to dream for us; and the collective dream of mankind is the electromagnetic sphere of the planet's television signals. Already some 80 light years in diameter, it is expanding confidently across the universe and is even now bringing to the natives of Proxima Centauri their first episodes of Dallas and the Reagan inauguration — dreams of the new Babylon that would take a Daniel to unravel.



Getting Gandhi

By Tariq Ali

THE MYTH OF THE MAHATMA, by Michael Edwardes (Constable, £12.95).

THIS book, unfortunately, has a lot in common with the closing scenes of a Hollywood Western. Just as the Indians are about to overwhelm the vanguard of Western civilisation the distant strains of familiar trumpets are heard. Viewers can relax again. The cavalry is on its way. In the case of Michael Edwardes we have to say that his latest rescue operation on behalf of the *raj* is not successful. *The Myth of the Mahatma* is a disappointing book.

Edwardes's targets are wide and varied. He is out to revenge the atrocities perpetrated by Richard Attenborough (in his Gandhi film), Paul Scott (The Jewel in the Crown), E. M. Forster (A Passage to India) and the myth-making expatriate Indian novelists (a reference to V. S. Naipaul?).

All these people are guilty of concentrating on the brutalities of the *raj*, whereas Mr Edwardes knows that it was a much more complex affair. The first thing to be said about all this is that it is hardly new. It will please the dying generation in the backwoods, but who else? The old guard has already been defeated and midnight's children now have the upper hand.

Over half the book is a rambling account of the vicissitudes of British imperialism in India. Here the author faces some problems. Any attempt to justify colonialism would have to prove that the end result benefited the majority of the people who were subjected to its rule. Edwardes is aware of this, but seeks to resolve the problem by a sleight of hand: "The conservative bias of the (British) Government in attaching to itself the landed classes was not allowed to interfere with the modernisation of both the administration and the economy."

Modernisation, if it means anything, implies a transformation of the countryside and the creation of an internal market capable of purchasing the products of industrialisation. When the British left India, the poor peasants' diet was less nutritious than it had been under the Mughal Empire.

The reasons for this failure are obvious. India was the most advanced civilisation confronted by the European powers who were vying for an Asian empire. Genocide, on the North American or Australian pattern, would have been impossible in purely military terms. A multi-millioned sub-continent could only be governed with the partial consent of the traditional ruling elites. To push through universal education, industrialisation, etc., would have created a giant that would have swallowed up the structures of the *raj* long before 1947.

In Gandhi, Attenborough portrayed the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar as a cold-blooded, premeditated crime. The scene shocked and educated many people in the West. Edwardes is far too intelligent to deny that the event took place, but he offers us the following mealy-mouthed justification:

"It does seem likely that (General) Dyer, who was a stranger to Amritsar, did not know that there were no other convenient exits from the Jallianwala Bagh, and that, when the crowd did not disperse because it could not, he panicked."

Give me Attenborough any day!

The second part of the book deals with Gandhi as a human being and a politician. Many of Edwardes's comments on the Mahatma are unexceptional. In fact Judith Brown had debunked the mythologies effectively in a series of books and articles over the last two decades.

Gandhi was not a saint, but it is worth recalling that the halo which was stuck on his head was placed there not just by his followers. The more sophisticated ideologists of the *raj* knew perfectly well that in Gandhi they had found a perfect opponent.

Of course he often broke the rules. What was important, however, was the fact that he had agreed to play the game in the first place. Gandhi's entire political strategy — a reformist social-pacifism — coincided with the long-term aims of the *raj*. If he hadn't existed the British would have had to invent him.

As far as the *raj* was concerned he faltered badly only once. After the fall of Singapore in 1942, Gandhi (and everyone else) felt the Japanese would soon be in India. The "Quit India" movement was intended as a signal to both an Empire on the decline and the votaries of the Rising Sun!

Gandhi's real significance lay in his ability to both arouse the peasant masses of India and confiscate their social aspirations. It is this contradiction that helps explain his many eccentricities. In fact once we dispel the clouds of incense that surround Gandhi we can perceive him clearly: the mongrel offspring of Victorian Liberalism and Indian mysticism.

This does not lessen his stature in any way. It simply puts him in context. To portray him as a sun without black spots or a saint without earthly desires is ridiculous. Edwardes is correct on all that, but where his own vision becomes myopic is in his failure to understand why Gandhi has become such a cult figure in the West.

The following episode might aid his comprehension: In 1964 two senior Indian communists visited Hanoi to attend the Vietnamese Communist Party congress. Afterwards they had a long relaxed talk with Ho Chi Minh. One of the Indians asked the Vietnamese: "Tell us, comrade, how is it that both our parties were formed roughly at the same time and yet you are in power and we are still struggling?" The old man smiled and replied: "There you had Gandhi. Here I was Gandhi." This is not apocryphal.

Chess

By Leonard Barden

No. 1915

White mates in three moves, against any defence (by E. Chelebi). Black is down to a single pawn move, but the problem contains a trap which catches many solvers.

Solution No. 1914:

White K at QR6, Q at K1, Rs at QN6 and Q3, Bs at K7 and K2, N at QB1, Ps at QR7, QN4, Q5 and K3. Black K at QB5, R at QB1, B at Q7, Ns at QN8 and KR2, Ps at QR5 and KB5. Mate in two.

1 R-Q6 (threat 2 R-QN3) R-B3 ch 2 RxR, or if KxP 2 R-QB6, or if N-B6 2 R-Q4, or if BxP 2 R-QB3, or if P-B6 2 Q-R4.

A SEVEN-YEAR chess saga ended on May 29 when the former USSR champion, Boris Gulko, arrived in Vienna with his family after finally gaining permission to emigrate. Gulko's campaign to persuade the Soviet authorities included several hunger strikes, plus a one man demo at the 1981 Moscow Interzonal. His wife Anna once lost a possible Russian women's title when her opponent was controversially reinstated by a Moscow committee after overstepping the time limit. Gulko himself played in the 1976 Interzonal but in recent years has been denied any opportunity to compete outside the USSR.

Their campaign to leave for Israel was actively supported by other ex-Soviet players now domiciled in the West as well as by European grandmasters. The Dutch team at a chess olympiad sported Gulko T-shirts during their match with the USSR, and most recently three GMs demonstrated outside the Prince Edward Theatre on the opening night of the musical *Chess*.

According to the new weekly edition of the British Chess Federation's *Newsflash*, Gulko plans to compete at Marseilles this month and then go on to the US Open. If his career pattern follows that of colleagues who have settled in the West, he could well become still stronger during the next 2-3 years. On USSR form, he is the best player to leave since Viktor Korchnoi.

Gulko's last important tournament before boarding the plane for Vienna was at Frunze in Central Asia where he finished second in a strong field: Makarichev 10/14, Gulko 9, Romanishin and Yurtaev 8½, Watson (England) 8; and ten others.

In this week's game Gulko, ranked No. 98 in the latest FIDE list, defeats a man listed No. 42 on the computer.

GM Georgy Azzamov — GM Boris Gulko
Grunfeld Defence (Frunze 1985)

1 P-Q4 N-KB3 2 P-QB4 P-KN3
3 N-QB3 P-Q4 4 B-B4 B-N2
5 P-K3 P-B4

A sharp, forcing plan. The Grunfeld Defence often leads to well debated positions so the choice between 5 . . . P-B4 and the alternative 5 . . . O-O (offering White the chance of 6 PxP NxP 7 NxN QxN 8 BxP) is likely to reflect home analysis rather than just different tastes.

6 QPxP Q-R4 7 R-B1 N-K5

7 . . . PxP 8 BxP O-O 9 N-K2 QxBP 10 Q-N3 Q-QR4 11 O-O N-B3 12 P-KR3 (better than 12 KR-Q1 N-R4) is considered a marginal edge for White.

8 PxP NxN 9 Q-Q2 QxRP
10 PxN Q-R4 11 B-B4 N-Q2
12 N-B3

In an earlier game, Dorfman-Gulko, USSR 1978, 12 N-K2 NxP 13 O-O P-QN4 14 R-R1 Q-N3 gave Black an active position.

12 . . . NxP 13 B-K5 BxB

A necessary exchange, since 13 . . . P-B3 14 B-Q4 leaves White's bishop well placed to support a later central advance by P-K4 and P-KB4.

14 NxB P-B3 15 N-B3 O-O

Up to here the play may well be prepared analysis by both sides, but White's next looks suspect. Logical is 16 Q-Q4 to push P-K4-5; in the game Gulko is able to block the centre and activate his Q-side pawn majority.

16 N-Q4 N-K5 17 Q-N2 N-Q3
18 B-R2 B-Q2 19 O-O QR-B1
20 P-K4 Q-B4 21 KR-K1 P-QN4

Now Black is ready to counter 22 P-K5 by PxP 23 RxP P-N5 24 P-QB4 R-B5 25 N-N3 NxQBP! So White switches plans to opening up the KR file, but here too Black benefits.

22 P-KR4 P-QR4 23 Q-K2 N-B5
24 P-R5 Q-Q3 25 QR-Q1 Q-K4
26 PxP PxP 27 P-N3 P-N4!

Another strong choice, planning 28 BxN RxB 29 Q-Q2 P-KN5 30 Q-R6 Q-N4! 31 QxQ ch PxQ with the better endgame.

28 Q-R5 R-KB2 29 N-B5 R-R2!

But not BxN 30 PxB QxBP 31 B-N1 with counterplay.

30 Q-B3 N-Q3 31 R-K3 K-B2
32 K-B1 P-QN5 33 PxP PxP
34 N-Q4 P-N5 35 Q-B4??

Immediately fatal. White had to try 35 Q-N2 when if N-N4 36 N-B6 Q-N7 37 P-K5 with complications: Black could instead play 35 . . . R-R6 planning Q-R4 and R-R7.

35 . . . R-R8 ch 36 K-K2 RxR

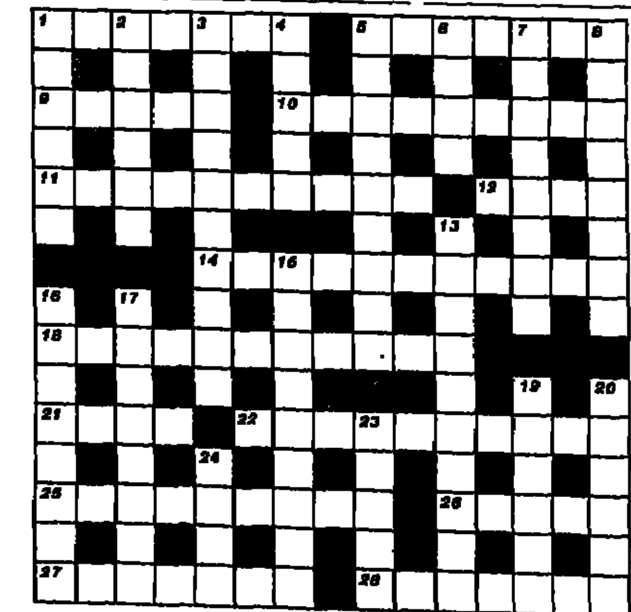
So that if 37 KxR QxN ch or 37 QxQ PxQ 38 KxR PxN.

37 Q-R6 B-N4ch! 38 NxB Q-N7 ch
39 Resigns.

A COUNTRY DIARY

OXFORDSHIRE: Some thirty years ago while staying with relatives in my present area, I paid an early morning visit at this time of the year to my old haunts in "The Forest" — Wychwood — and there experienced a most memorable example of the power of one's nose and ears as evocative agents. As I paused to listen to the song of a blackcap, I became aware of a sweet perfume from somewhere nearby, which immediately conjured up a mental picture of a Kentish plover performing an agitated distraction display near its clutch of four chicks. I then found the source of the scent, a patch of the large butterfly orchid in bloom, and was able to work out the odd connection. The picture recalled was of a salt-pan on the Mediterranean coast of France, where the warm air was heavy with the scent from the white trumpets of an amaryllid (*Pancratium illyricum*) whose leafless blooms grew in profusion on the sandy banks, while from a tamarisk nearby a blackcap sang. In the sixteen years since I have returned to my old haunts, I have been unable until now to find a single specimen of the butterfly orchid in bloom, although I have come across odd specimens nipped in the bud by deer. But this year, delighted to find a single example of the lesser butterfly in bloom, I came across a patch of about twenty of the larger species in long grass at the edge of a ride. A botanist told me that he too had found a colony about a mile away. In each site the specimens are remarkably fine, one spike bearing no less than twenty-two florets.

W. D. Campbell



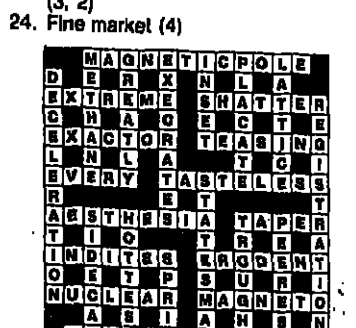
ENIGMATIST

ACROSS

1. I may have Burgess, Breakfast TV man, snatching gold (7)
5. I ordered Archer to shoot German, less unstable inside (7)
9. Half of 6, 1 across 24 partnership is coming over after the weekend (5)
10. Customary preparations to resolve reservation problems? (9)
11. Severely cut, brought into State Hospital retiring Italian nobleman to ruminate (4, 3, 3)
12. Entertainment lacking a drink (4)
14. In Christmas novelty, stop one going to the gallows (5-6)
18. Worn down straight edges forming proper procedure (6, 5)
21. Are you going to 6, 1 across 24? No. 2: Guillotining custom (4)
22. Direct higher data processing (5, 5)
25. Took out old vehicle, overturned by unruly youth (9)
26. Are you going to 6, 1 across 24? No. 4: The enemy of the radio (5)
27. Recently departed artist left at the side (7)
28. Are you going to 6, 1 across 24? No. 1: Players in comedy (7)

DOWN

1. Split by sound group (6)
2. Take orders and look inadequate in Hampshire (6)
3. Not seeing a Parisian mix gin and tonic (10)
4. Was he making space for cable? (5)
5. Half of 6, 1 across 24 partnership or type of music included in Elgar's Variations (9)
6. Mark's chariot (4)
7. What one has to pay to have string wound (8)
8. Are you going to 6, 1 across 24? No. 3: Prayers about Forster? (8)
13. Notices cross in exchange for cold car? (3, 7)
15. One shoots Falstaff's follower after a song(3-6)
16. Delicate Spurs' misery (8)
17. Make a false bird drop the matter (6, 2)
19. The good side of Stevenson (6)
20. Queen in strong currents, one on horseback (6)
23. Brought before the Judge, oppressed, and not giving resistance (3, 2)
24. Fine market (4)



Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

THE twelfth annual match between the two Houses of Parliament at London's Inn on the Park Hotel proved once again to be an enjoyable occasion, and I was pleased to present a cheque for £2,000 to Clement Freud for the charity Help A Child To See. The match is scored as rubber bridge duplicate, and the scores at lunch were exactly level. But the House of Commons edged in front after the interval and eventually won an exciting match by 900 points.

The teams were: Commons — Sir Peter Emery (captain), Kenneth Baker, Tim Sainsbury, Robin Squire, Richard Holt, Dr John Marek, Michael Mates, and Mrs Sally Oppenheim, who has played in every match in the series; Lords — The Duke of Atholl, Lord Smith of Marlow, Lord Gisborough, and Lord Grimthorpe. Lord Smith won the Anthony Berry memorial Trophy for the best played hand for his performance on the following deal.

Dealer South; love all.

NORTH
♠ A 8 5
♥ K 7 4
♦ K Q 4
♣ 10 8 5 3

WEST
♠ J 7
♥ 9 8 5 2
♦ J 9 8 7 6 2
♣ K

EAST
♠ 10 9 6 3
♥ A Q J 10 3
♦ 5
♣ J 4 2

SOUTH
♠ K Q 4 2
♥ 6
♦ A 10 3
♣ A Q 9 7 6

When the House of Commons held the North-South cards, the bidding was as follows:

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1C	NB	2NT	NB
3S	NB	3NT(1)	NB
NB	NB		

(1) This was badly judged. South clearly had a distributional hand which was not suited for a no-trump contract.

North was always struggling after the obvious heart lead, and he eventually went one down when he took the club finesse for his ninth trick and lost to West's singleton king.

At the other table, the House of Lords' pair had an excellent acution to the correct contract.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
Ld Smith		Atholl	
1C	NB	2NT	NB
3S	NB	4C	NB
5C	NB	NB	NB

West led the seven of diamonds and, without the slightest hesitation, Lord Smith won in dummy and played a small club to the ace, felling West's singleton king. After that he had no trouble in making an overtrick to chalk up +420.

If declarer had finessed the queen of clubs, of course, he would have been in grave danger of going down in 5C, either by suffering a second round diamond ruff or by misguessing the position on the next round of trumps. Since he could afford to lose one trump trick but not two, his safety play of cashing the ace, with the intention of leading towards the queen on the second round, was perfectly correct.

I have always believed that one must maximise the advantage of being the dealer by opening the bidding as often as possible, particularly when you have a good, rebiddable suit. This is much safer than passing first and then entering the auction at a dangerously high level, and it can also make life more difficult for the opponents. Michael Mates followed this principle to advantage on the following hand from the final rubber:

WEST
♠ A K Q 10 9 3
♥ 8 2
♦ 10 9 3
♣ 7 4

EAST
♠ 8 6
♥ A K Q J 8 4 3
♦ A K 2
♣ 8

For the Commons, the bidding proceeded:

WEST	EAST
Mates	Holt
1S	3H
3S	6H
NB	

At the other table, West passed as dealer and North opened with a well-timed pre-emptive bid of 3C. Opposite a partner who had passed originally, East settled for a direct bid of 4H, and the laydown slam was missed.

CRICKET: Matthew Engel on the Benson and Hedges Cup Final

Cool Middlesex keep the winning habit

I SUPPOSE we ought to be blasé about this now. This was the fourth year running in which a Lord's cup final was decided with the last available delivery — by just two runs — and for the third time the winners were Mike Gatting's Middlesex, undoubted possessors of the coolest heads of the game.

Those heads were both cool and sodden when the final act of the Benson and Hedges Cup was staged in the rain and gloaming ("How far that little candle throws his beams" — Portia on looking at the lights on the Lord's scoreboard) on Saturday. The only things missing were appropriate sound effects. The followers of Kent and Middlesex add to the decorum but not the folk-colour of these occasions; it was a bit like the annual field day and gala of the National Union of Merchant Bankers (NUMB).

Perhaps great cricket was missing too. In the last over when, in the words of the bowler Hughes, the ball was like a bar of soap, he could not stop himself bowling two full-tosses, enabling Steve Marsh to hit one six and giving Dilley the chance to hit another, when a six was needed, off the last. Dilley blew it.

And Kent lost the game earlier, at least as much as Middlesex won it. They won an important toss on a misty, moist morning when any set of batsmen might have been bowled out for nothing. And though Dilley and Ellison followed cup final tradition by bowling themselves into the England squad, Baptiste and Cowdrey were inadequate, and there were enough survivors at lunchtime to let Radley take charge of the rescue operation.

Radley is a remarkable cricketer, a walking illustration of how one-day necessity becomes the mother of invention; I could swear one of his fours came off a deliberate inside edge. With help from Emburey (whose niggardly bowling later just gave him the match award from David Gower), Middlesex eked their way to 199.

The weather, contrary to forecasts, did not improve. But the bowling did. Daniel and Cowans were impressive at the start; Gatting slipped in four affordable overs himself to provide room for manoeuvre at the end; then the spinners bristled through their work so quickly that Kent — who had dawdled in the field — had insufficient time to realise what a mess they were in.

The remarkable thing was that they ever got so close. For that they have to thank the latest Cowdrey, Graham, more gifted than his brother though by all accounts without the zest for the game and the life. There was great zest in his hitting, though. One tried and failed to imagine Cowdrey pere, in a rain-soaked sweat, smashing Edmonds into the grandstand Mk III did it twice and Kent, needing 84 off 10, 51 off five, 31 off three and 14 off the last, remained alive even if their supporters did not. "Mexican waves? I sold all mine at peak, old boy."

Marsh, the wicket-keeper, also had a good day, suggesting that Kent's other dynasty is in good hands. And Kent's decision to bat on through the murk displayed either a sensible tactical appreciation of the fact that really bad light hinders the fielders even more than the batsman, who at least has a rough idea where and when the ball might arrive, or an even more sensible realisation that winning is not the only consideration on cup final day.

But the balance of cricketing power remains unchanged; Middlesex have won a trophy a year since 1982; and since 1979, the year Kent last the habit, Middlesex and Essex have taken 15 of the 29 available prizes between them. Middlesex will not be adding any more to that total this summer, though Gatting made it clear that he will kick bottoms if the team tries to coast and does not fight its way up from second to bottom in the championship.

It was a good few days for Gatting. On Friday he became the proud father of a new male addition (7lb. 3oz. with considerable power to add, if paternity means anything) to be called Ian Paul James. Three initials, explained Gatting, so he could get into MCC. Yes, I understand that. But Ian, Ian . . . now where have I heard that name before?

French loses out in England's search for runs

Alan Dunn's DIARY

IN THIS summer of English cricketing fragility it is no sinecure being an international player. Bruce French became the latest victim this week of the search for greater batting power even though his expertise as a wicketkeeper in the final two Tests against the Indians was highly praised all round. For the opening two limited over internationals against New Zealand this week he loses his place to Jack Richards, the Surrey wicketkeeper, whose better form with the bat includes a recent century against Middlesex, who are captained by Mike Gatting, the England captain.

French could still be recalled for the full Test series against New Zealand, of course, but if he is not he could ruefully reflect that his international career was abruptly halted not because of his own poor form but because England's specialist batsmen are in an era of comparative failure. The final Test against the Indians petered out into a draw, thus saving England from a record equalling sequence of eight straight defeats, but the batting was again uninspiring.

Lord's have recognised this by turning again to Lamb for the one-day series against New Zealand. Since being dropped against India he has had an inspired spell for his county, rounding it off last Sunday with a powerful 97 for Northamptonshire in beating Derbyshire by that number of runs to stay joint top with Nottinghamshire of the Sunday League. Lamb joins a one day squad of 13: C. W. J. Athey, M. R. Benson, G. R. Dilley, P. H. Edmonds, R. M. Ellison, J. E. Emburey, N. A. Foster, M. W. Gatting, G. A. Gooch, D. I. Gower, A. J. Lamb, D. R. Pringle, C. J. Richards.

England's draw against India at Edgbaston owed much to inspired spin bowling from Edmonds when India faced only a target of 236 for victory, on the face of it small beer for such a highly confident batting side. The two sides had tied their first innings on 390, Gatting hitting 183 not out for England. But in their second innings England found the bustling, skiddy action of seam bowler Chetan Sharma too much for them. He finished for the first time with a match average of 10 wickets for 188 — his figures looking better in the second innings when he had six wickets for 58. England never got on top of the bowling and were all out for 235, leaving India nearly a full day to bat.

After a disastrous opening spell, when the England pace attack played straight to Indian batting strengths, particularly Gavaskar's strokes off his legs, Edmonds came on to take four for 31, including rare ducks for Vengsarkar and Shastri. Bad light and drizzle then halted the match for 50 minutes after which both sides seemed content to settle for a draw, with India 174 for five at the close and having won the three-match series 2-0.

Vengsarkar finished top of the Indian batting for the series with an average of 90 for his six innings, with a top score of 126. Second was More with 52. Maninder Singh headed the bowling with 12 wickets at an average of 15.58, followed by Sharma's 16 at an average of 18.75. Top batsman for England was their captain, Gatting, with an average of 73.25, including a top score of 183. Next was Gooch on 29.16. Leading bowler was Pringle with 13 wickets at a cost of 25.42. The series could be the last in England for India's former captain, Gavaskar. He holds four Test records for India — he has played in 115 Tests, batted in 201 innings, scored 9,367 runs at an average of 50.65, and is the only Indian to have taken more than 100 catches.

That other man of records, Yorkshire's Geoffrey Boycott, duly collected the 150th century of his career last week. It came at Middlesbrough, took 5¼ hours, and sent him past Herbert Sutcliffe as the county's record batsman and fifth in the all-time list behind Hobbs, 197, Hendren, 170, Hammond, 167, and Mead, 153. And it came, like his first century 23 years ago, against Leicestershire in a drawn match. The county championship had its first change at the top for some time when Essex, the leaders, were beaten in two days by Lancashire. Gloucestershire took advantage of the lapse by beating Glamorgan to take over at the top with 142 points, eight ahead of Essex and 25 ahead of Nottinghamshire. Lancashire's win by an innings and 22 runs at Old Trafford owed much to a resurgence in the pace bowling of their West Indian, Patterson. He took six for 46 as Essex fell for 71, then four for 43 when they went the second time for 147.

Essex later went from bad to worse when they were removed from the second round of the NatWest Trophy, which they hold. They were beaten by Warwickshire, for whom Humpage scored a bristling 70 in their total of 255 in 59.5 overs. Essex could only make 191 in 51.4 overs in reply. Limited over cricket matches these days are often finely tuned affairs, with victory hanging on the last over or so. Typical was Lancashire's win at Somerset, where they set a target of 221 in the 60 overs and beat Somerset by three runs, with Rose hitting a six off the last ball of the innings. Middlesex, who were later to win the Benson and Hedges final at Lord's, looked set to beat Yorkshire at Headingley when bad light stopped play. They were then 123 for four chasing a target of 205 for nine, but on the second day Carrick took three for 40 and Middlesex departed the competition at 185. In the quarter finals Yorkshire are at home to Sussex, Surrey play Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire play Lancashire, and Worcestershire play Warwickshire.

Zimbabwe retained the ICC Trophy in beating Holland in the final of the month long series by 25 runs at Lord's. They thus qualify for the World Cup next year. Zimbabwe made 243 for nine (R. D. Brown 60, A. C. Waller 59) while R. Lifmann made 41 in Holland's reply of 218.

The World Cup, to be held in India and Pakistan, will be over 50 overs rather than the intended 60, it was decided by the International Cricket Conference annual meeting in London last week. It was one of the more positive decisions to emerge. An Australian proposal to outlaw the bouncer failed as did an English plan for tightening the law; while the West Indies again refused to bowl a minimum number of overs per day in a Test, now accepted elsewhere. In a compromise, a letter is to be sent to the leading umpires promising ICC support if they take a harder line over the use of bouncers.

America and Canada won their first world show jumping championships at Aachen, West Germany, last week. Canada's Gail Greenough became the first woman to win the individual title when she was the only one of the four finalists to achieve four clear rounds. Conrad Homefeld, United States, was second, and Nick Skelton, Britain, was third. In the team event the United States won their first title, with Britain second and France third.

England's Rugby Football Union have decided that from September 1987 there will be an English Club Championship. It will be open to all 1,900 clubs in the country on a league basis with promotion and relegation at every level. There will be local leagues at the bottom of the pyramid, divisional and area leagues in the middle, and three national leagues at the top. Meanwhile, the New Zealand Rugby Union have taken a lenient line with the 31 players who took part in a rebel tour of South Africa this year. Although they have been found guilty of misconduct, the rebels have been banned from only two Test matches each.

In the final European golf tournament before this week's Open championship at Turnberry, there was at last a new name as winner, Mark Mouland, a 25 years old Welshman. He took the £18,000 first prize in the Car Care event at Moortown, Leeds, with a record equalling last round of 64, five under par, for a total of 272. It was his first win after four years as a tour professional and also earned him automatic qualification for the Open. Seve Ballesteros, who had won the four previous European tournaments, took the week off to prepare for the Open.

MOTOR RACING: Maurice Hamilton on the British Grand Prix

Memorable Mansell

NIGEL MANSELL pulled off the most memorable victory of his burgeoning career on Sunday when he won the Shell Oils British Grand Prix at Brands Hatch after 75 laps of constant pressure from his team-mate, Nelson Piquet.

The Williams-Honda pair completely dominated this ninth round of the world championship, and the most remarkable fact was not that Mansell lapped the third-placed McLaren of the world champion, Alan Prost, but that he did it in a car which he had been reluctant to drive all weekend.

More than that, had the race not been stopped after a first-lap accident Mansell would have retired within a few minutes of the start, and would not now be leading Prost by four points in the drivers' championship.

Mansell, after a clean start, appeared to have taken the lead from Piquet, but the Englishman slowed suddenly as he snatched second gear. A drive shaft had failed, and as Mansell continued at reduced pace he radioed the Williams pit to say that his race was over.

Meanwhile, a few yards behind Mansell, an apparent mechanical failure on the Arrow of Thierry Boutsen sent the Belgian driver careering across the track before bouncing off the crash barrier at the first corner.

The ensuing chaos involved eight cars at the back of the grid, including the Ligier of Jacques Laffite. The Frenchman suffered broken legs and a fractured pelvis when he was forced off the road and into the barrier

The race was stopped immediately and Mansell was the only driver to benefit dramatically from the 80-minute delay since the rules permitted him to take the re-start in the team's spare car. Other drivers involved in the accident also re-started in their back-up cars.

Piquet, starting from pole position, took the lead, while Mansell, dropping to third place behind the Benetton of Gerhard Berger, began to settle into a car which he had driven only for a handful of laps during practice on Friday and which, as a matter of course, had been set up for Piquet. By the third lap he had passed Berger, and the Austrian soon had to retire with engine trouble.

For 20 laps Mansell kept Piquet in sight, and then he took the lead shortly before Ayrton Senna, lying in a distant third place, retired his Lotus-Renault with gear box trouble. With no other driver even remotely in contention it became clear tht this would be an in-house battle in which team tactics would play no part.

Mansell stoutly defended his position in a manner which stretched any remaining team spirit to the limit, and for the final 43 laps there was no quarter asked or given as they raced flat out, Piquet easing off the pressure only in the final two laps.

The spare car did not carry a drink bottle, and Mansell was exhausted after 90 minutes of unrelenting racing at an average speed of 129 mph.

"It was the hardest race and the most emotional win of my career," said Mansell as he celebrated his fourth victory of the season and his second in succession at Brands Hatch. "I feel very sorry for Jacques Laffite, and I wish him a speedy recovery. But if it hadn't been for that incident my race would have been run."